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Women's WC champs to get nearly ₹40 crore pay cheque

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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800 dead, 2,500 injured as 6.0 quake devastates Afghanistan

Civil defence workers and locals evacuate injured victims of the earthquake in Afghanistan's Mazar Dara on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

KABUL, 1 SEPT

A powerful earthquake struck eastern Afghanistan late Sunday, killing at least 800 people and injuring over 2,500, according to the Taliban government.

The 6.0 magnitude quake struck at 11.47pm, with its epicentre located 27 km east-northeast of Jalalabad in Nangarhar province, at a shallow depth of 8 km, the US Geological Survey reported. Shallower quakes typically cause greater destruction. Several aftershocks followed.

The worst-hit region is Kunar province, where most casualties were reported. Videos showed rescuers pulling survivors from rubble, with many victims taken away on stretchers and helicopters. Locals used bare hands to search for missing relatives.

Homes in the affected areas, mostly made of mud bricks, concrete, and wood, collapsed easily under the tremors, highlighting Afghanistan's vulnerability due to poor construction standards.

Meanwhile, in Delhi, Afghan nationals anxiously await news from their families back home. Communication lines remain down.

Farzan, 24, said, "No one has answered calls from home. I've tried over 100 times. We can't eat or work properly."

Nasir Khan, 35, who works in a Delhi restaurant, said, "I feel helpless. My grandparents and cousins are in Kabul. I've lost a cousin to a quake before."

Kareem, a waiter, added, "Communication is always difficult, but now it's a painful void. My uncle lives in that area. We only get updates from the news."

Even those with families outside the quake zone expressed deep concern. Authorities fear the toll may rise as rescue efforts continue. *—PTI*

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A village completely destroyed by the quake in Kunar **PHOTO: PTI**

Himachal declared disaster-hit amid monsoon havoc

SHIMLA, 1 SEPT

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Monday declared the state "disaster-hit" in the Assembly, following extensive damage caused by cloudbursts, flash floods, and landslides in recent weeks.

320 LIVES
lost and damage estimated at over Rs 3 lakh crore this monsoon

Sukhu stated that Rs 3,560 crore in losses have been recorded, mainly affecting roads, bridges, and essential services. An aerial survey of affected areas has been conducted.

Of the 15,000 pilgrims stranded en route to Manimahesh in Chamba, 10,000 have been rescued, with monitoring ongoing.

The India Meteorological Department reported that August rainfall was 68% above normal, the highest since 1949 and ninth-highest since 1901.

The State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) reported 320 deaths, with Mandi (51), Kangra (49), and Shimla (29) worst affected.

The toll includes 1,280 homes fully damaged, 27,640 partially, and massive public/private property loss. *—PTI*

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Modi teams up with Putin, Xi to rattle US

Prime Minister Narendra Modi shares a light moment with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping during the 25th SCO Heads of State Council Summit in China **PHOTO: PTI**

Modi held a 45-minute pvt convo with Putin in his limousine

TIANJIN, 1 SEPT

They laughed, clasped hands, embraced, sending a message to the United States – a possible new world order. The bonhomie between Chinese President Xi Jinping, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit on Monday could be a threat to America's world dominance, even as India's ties with the United States face their toughest test in two decades.

In his first visit to China in seven years, Modi joined Xi and Putin in a symbolic display of solidarity. Putin referred to the group as "we three friends" before a broadcast glitch cut the audio. Their camaraderie presented a united front among three powers increasingly at odds with Washington.

Ahead of official talks, Modi and Putin held a 45-minute private conversation inside the Russian president's limousine after sharing a ride from the summit venue. Putin had waited 10 minutes for Modi to join him before boarding the car. Modi later posted a photo of the two leaders in the backseat, saying, "Conversations with him are always insightful."

PM Narendra Modi shares a limo ride with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the SCO Summit in Tianjin, China, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

The bilateral discussions focused on deepening cooperation in trade, energy, space, security, fertilisers and culture. "Even in the most difficult circumstances, India and Russia have walked together, shoulder to shoulder," Modi told Putin.

The SCO summit also saw Xi announce plans to accelerate the creation of a development bank and a green energy platform, pledging $1.4 billion in loans to member states. The initiatives are widely viewed as efforts to reshape global economic leadership away from Western dominance.

China had been pushing the grouping to set up a development bank on the lines of the New Development Bank (NDB) of the BRICS and the Asian Investment Infrastructure Bank (AIIB), in which India is the second largest shareholder.

Both banks, based in China, which were initially regarded as competitors to the IMF, World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), are now working with them with a co-financing pattern.

Meanwhile, the US embassy in New Delhi posted that the India-US partnership "continues to reach new heights", a statement that appeared out of step with the reality as tensions between the two countries have spiked after President Donald Trump doubled tariffs on Indian imports to 50 per cent, in retaliation for India's continued purchases of discounted Russian oil. *—PTI*

>>>More on Pages 3, 5 and 6

India offered zero tariffs but its too late: Trump

NEW YORK/ WASHINGTON, 1 SEPT

- Trump said, "What few people understand is that we do very little business with India, but they do a tremendous amount of business with us."

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the SCO summit, US President Donald Trump claimed India has "offered" to cut tariffs to zero, but warned, "it's getting late."

Posting on Truth Social, Trump said, "What few people understand is that we do very little business with India, but they do a tremendous amount of business with us." Calling the relationship "totally one-sided," he criticised India for imposing some of the world's highest tariffs, which he said have long prevented US companies from accessing the Indian market.

"India sells massive amounts of goods to its biggest client, the US, but we sell them very little," Trump said. He added that India buys most of its oil and military hardware from Russia, not the US. "They should have cut tariffs years ago."

India has dismissed the US tariffs as "unjustified and unreasonable." Modi recently stated he "cannot compromise" on the interests of farmers, cattle-rearers, and small industries.

In 2024–25, bilateral trade stood at $131.8 billion — with India exporting $86.5 billion to the US and importing $45.3 billion — underlining the economic stakes as tensions escalate. *—PTI*

IS THIS PUTIN'S DE-DOLLARISATION MSG TO TRUMP?

"National currencies are being used more widely in mutual settlements for trade among SCO countries. The pace of development of cooperation within the SCO is impressive

Navarro: Brahmins profiteering off Indian people

NEW YORK, 1 SEPT

In a sharp rebuke of India's continued purchase of Russian oil, White House Trade Adviser Peter Navarro accused "Brahmins" of profiteering at the expense of the Indian people, urging an immediate halt to the practice.

Speaking to Fox News on Sunday, Navarro said, "Look, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a great leader, but I don't understand how he cooperates with Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping when he leads the world's biggest democracy."

Navarro, a senior counsellor in the Trump administration, has stepped up criticism of New Delhi amid worsening US-India trade ties under former President Donald Trump's tariff regime.

"Before the Ukraine war, India bought very little Russian oil. Now they're making a ton of money, and that fuels Putin's war machine," he said.

He further claimed India has

Peter Navarro **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA**

the "highest tariffs in the world", hurting American workers and taxpayers, and called India the "maharaja of tariffs".

"The Indian people need to understand what's going on. You've got Brahmins profiteering while Ukrainians die," he added.

Notably, Navarro has called the Ukraine conflict "Modi's war" and claimed the path to peace "runs through New Delhi".

The US has largely avoided criticising China, the biggest buyer of Russian crude. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Estranged partner sets woman ablaze in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

A 35-year-old woman died after being allegedly set ablaze with petrol by her estranged live-in partner following a quarrel, police said on Monday.

The incident took place on 30 August under the jurisdiction of the Electronics City police station.

The deceased is Vanajakshi. The accused, Vithal, 52, a cab driver, was arrested.

A senior officer said Vithal was addicted to alcohol. Both had been previously married before entering into a live-in relationship about five years ago.

"Fed up with his harassment under the influence of alcohol, she left him and later developed a close friendship with another man named Mariappa," police said. On the day of the incident, Vithal followed Vanajakshi's car as she was returning from a temple with Mariappa. At a traffic signal, he intercepted the vehicle and poured petrol. While others managed to escape, he allegedly chased her, splashed more petrol, and set her on fire with a lighter. A passerby rushed to her aid. She had 60 per cent burns and succumbed to her injuries. *—PTI*

EC to accept objections on SIR filed after 1 Sept

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

The Election Commission (EC) informed the Supreme Court on Monday that claims, objections, and corrections to the draft electoral roll under Bihar's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) can be submitted beyond the 1 September deadline. However, they will only be considered after finalisation of the roll.

The Court termed the confusion a "trust issue" and directed the Bihar State Legal Services Authority to deploy paralegal volunteers to assist voters and parties in filing claims and objections. The volunteers will submit confidential reports to district judges, with the state's consolidated data to be reviewed on 8 September.

As per the EC's 24 June schedule, claims and objections close on 1 September, with the final roll due on 30 September. However, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi noted that claims could continue until the last date for nomination filings in each constituency. The Court recorded that "all inclusions/exclusions" will be integrated into the final roll and allowed political parties to respond to the EC's note.

EC noted that 99.5 per cent of Bihar's 7.24 crore electors had submitted documents. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

UNDER NEW ACT

Face up to 7 yrs in jail for forging passport

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

The Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, a comprehensive new law regulating entry, stay and exit of foreigners in India, came into effect on Monday, introducing severe penalties for using forged passports or visas.

Passed during the Budget session of Parliament and receiving Presidential assent on 4 April 2025, the law replaces four older Acts: The Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920; the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939; the Foreigners Act, 1946; and the Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act, 2000.

A Ministry of Home Affairs notification confirmed the implementation date as 1 September 2025.

Under the new legislation, anyone found using or supplying forged or fraudulently obtained travel documents, including visas or passports,

- The Act also mandates universities, hotels, hospitals, and other institutions to report details of foreign nationals in their care,

will face imprisonment of 2 to 7 years and a fine ranging from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 10 lakh.

The Act also mandates universities, hotels, hospitals, and other institutions to report details of foreign nationals in their care to aid the tracking of overstaying individuals.

Further, international airlines and shipping companies must submit passenger and crew manifests, along with advance passenger information, to Indian immigration authorities upon arrival.

Foreigners entering India without valid documents may face up to 5 years' imprisonment, a fine of up to Rs 5 lakh, or both.

The law grants the central government authority to regulate or close locations frequently visited by foreigners and impose conditions on their use or restrict access to specific groups.

This marks India's first unified immigration law, streamlining the framework governing foreigners. *—PTI*

Senior officials to helm GBA, says DKS

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said senior officers with extensive administrative experience would be appointed as commissioners for the five corporations newly formed under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA). He said, "The GBA and the five corporations are coming into effect. We have held discussions and decided to appoint senior officers with administrative experience, who have previously served as deputy commissioners, as commissioners for the five corporations." He added, "It has been decided to appoint those officials who are currently working locally." Asked about use of helicopters and aircraft for government work, he said, "The CM had given me the responsibility of taking a decision on this and calling for tenders. We are trying to study the models from other states."—*Salar News*

Murmu vows to learn Kannada after CM's jibe

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday said she would make efforts to learn Kannada, emphasising that she holds deep respect for every language, culture, and tradition in the country. Speaking at the Diamond Jubilee celebration of the All India Institute of Speech and Hearing (AIISH) here, Murmu responded to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who had addressed the gathering in Kannada and asked the dignitaries seated on the dais if they understood the language. "I would like to tell the Chief Minister that although Kannada is not my mother tongue, I deeply cherish all the languages, cultures, and traditions of my country. I hold great respect and regard for each of them," she said. "And I will certainly make an effort to learn Kannada, little by little." —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Lokayukta grills Radhika for Rs 2 cr loan to Zameer

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Adding to the ongoing investigation into Housing Minister Zameer Ahmad Khan's alleged illegal assets investigation, actress and film producer Radhika Kumaraswamy is now under scrutiny by the Lokayukta. Investigators have revealed that Radhika extended a Rs 2 crore loan to Minister Khan. Summoned by Lokayukta officials, Radhika has reportedly provided an official statement. She reportedly said that the loan was financed from the profits of her 2012 film, 'Lucky'. This inquiry originates from a 2019 investigation into the I Monetary Advisory scam, a significant financial fraud. The summons followed Khan's written admission of receiving the loan. —*Salar News*

2 die of heart attacks during idol immersions

MYSURU, 1 SEPT

A 34- year-old man died of cardiac arrest while performing pooja before an idol of the deity Ganesh during an immersion procession that took place at Harave village in Mysuru district. The deceased was identified as Auto Raju. He is survived by his wife and three children. He had also lost his father prior to four months. According to police sources, Raju developed a chest pain and collapsed during the immersion procession on 30 August. In a separate incident, a 55-year-old man died of a cardiac arrest during the Ganesh idol immersion celebration at Jottanapura in KR Pet taluk in Mandya district. The deceased, Manjunath, suddenly collapsed during the procession and died on the road before he could be taken to the hospital. —*Salar News*

BJP holds rally in D'sthala, demands central probe

Says Cong has failed to deliver justice to Hindu community

DHARMASTHALA, 1 SEPT

The BJP on Monday organised a massive rally in Dharmasthala, demanding a central agency probe into allegations of multiple murders, rapes, and burials in the temple town.

According to the saffron party, nearly one lakh people from across the State took part in the demonstration, which it described as a show of solidarity against what it termed an "attempt to vilify the temple and its traditions".

The 'Dharmasthala Chalo' rally saw the participation of Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, former chief minister Sadananda Gowda, Leader of Opposition in the assembly R Ashoka, BJP State President BY Vijayendra, MPs, and other senior leaders.

Addressing the gathering, Vijayendra urged the Centre to hand over the case to either the CBI or the NIA. He accused the Congress government led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah of having "failed to deliver justice" to the Hindu community.

Party leaders said the rally was intended to counter a "smear campaign" against one of the State's most prominent religious and cultural centres.

"The issue here is irrespective of caste, creed and religion, everybody is demanding a thorough investigation by CBI or NIA. It is a must in the Dharmasthala episode. This is the demand of all the devotees of Dharmasthala lord Manjunatha," Vijayendra said. "Crores and crores of devotees are upset, the way in which the false propaganda has been carried out at the national and international level. The sentiments of the devotees are hurt".

Earlier in the day, Vijayendra and Ashoka, along with a delegation of BJP leaders, visited the Manjunatha temple and offered prayers. They also met temple Dharmadhikari, Veerendra Heggade.

Meanwhile, Congress launched a counter protest against the BJP and JD(S) workers in City.

The Congress protesters alleged that BJP was creating a false narrative against the Congress-led State government and confusing people in the name of the Dharmasthala issue. —*PTI/ANI*

State BJP President BY Vijayendra with party legislators and leaders takes part in a 'padyatra' as part of the party's 'Dharmasthala Chalo' rally, at Dharmasthala Temple in Dakshina Kannada on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

> **The scandal is (being talked about) in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Delhi, Pakistan and by the BBC and Al Jazeera. Thus, we are demanding an NIA investigation. They are targeting the Hindus and their culture.... Which international fund is coming to India? The Congress are supporting the toolkit.** -R Ashoka, Opposition Leader

Congress workers allege that the State BJP is spreading misinformation about Dharmasthala during their protest near Congress office on Race Course Road, in City, on Monday **PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD**

RSS vs RSS: Priyank on BJP's D'sthala rally

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Priyank Kharge called the BJP's protests surrounding the Dharmasthala case an internal feud within the RSS.

"This is not BJP vs Congress. This is RSS vs RSS," he said, speaking to the media at Vikas Soudha.

Kharge questioned the BJP's newfound activism in the Dharmasthala case: "They were silent when the SIT was formed. Earlier, they themselves had demanded a reinvestigation into the Sowjanya case. What changed now?"

He called BJP's push to hand the case over to national agencies like the CBI or NIA impractical and unnecessary.

"CBI already has 74 pending cases from Karnataka alone. They've written to the Centre about staff shortages. How will they take on more?" he asked.

He accused the BJP of trying to pin internal ideological clashes within the Sangh Parivar on the State government.

Reacting to BJP's objections over author Bhanu Mushtaq inaugurating Dasara this year, Kharge said, "When BJP was in power, they invited former president Abdul Kalam and poet Nisar Ahmed. Was that because they were Muslims, or because they contributed to society?"

"They are using yatras like Dharmasthala Chalo and Chamundeshwari Chalo for political survival," Kharge remarked.

He also took aim at former MP Pratap Simha: "When Tipu and Hyder Ali ruled, did Dasara celebrations stop? No. They were grand even then." —*Salar News*

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah after inaugurating a PM Shree school buildingin his native Siddaramanahundi, on Monday **PHOTO: X @SIDDARAMAIAH**

CM: I'm Hindu, but not inhuman like BJP

MYSURU, 1 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday pointed at the Ram Mandir which he had helped build at his native village Siddaramanahundi and said he is not against the Hindu community as projected by BJP.

"I'm also a Hindu but not the inhuman kind like the BJP and Right-wingers," he asserted, brushing aside the BJP's rally at Dharmasthala.

Calling BJP's conduct in the Dharmasthala and the Chamundi Hills issue "hypocrisy", the Chief Minister said, they feel that Hindus will unite with them because of what they are doing.

"Let them (BJP) do it, they are doing things for politics. They feel that they will benefit from it politically, but they won't get any benefit," Siddaramaiah said after inaugurating newly constructed PM Shree school building.

"Real Hindus are not like BJP leaders who hold such rallies for political mileage," he added. "BJP leaders are trying to project me as anti-Hindu, But it will not work out for them."

Siddaramaiah backed his Deputy DK Shivakumar after the latter stirred a controversy by saying that said Chamundi Hill and Goddess Chamundeshwari were not the property of Hindus alone.

The CM accused the BJP of trying to do politics in Mysuru Dasara and asked if they know anything other than lying.

"Banu Mushtaq is a Kannada writer. She is invited to the Dasara inauguration as she is the International Booker Prize winner. How many have got this prize? ," he said. "Dasara is a Nada Habba, which is celebrated by all Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains together. "

—*Salar News with Agencies*

> **Mysuru kings never prescribed which dharma to follow as they believed that there is only one God irrespective of the number of dharmas. I would like to thank the Mysuru kings for setting such an example..... Urs community may be small in size, but its contribution to the state is immense**
>
> -DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

Class 8 boy 'rapes', impregnates Class 7 girl in Bagalkot district

BAGALKOT, 1 SEPT

Soon after "child pregnancy" cases were reported in Yadgir and Shivamogga, yet another shocking case has emerged in Bagalkot district where an eighth-standard student allegedly raped a seventh-standard girl. The girl is now found to be two months pregnant.

Currently, the girl is 16 years old, and the boy is 17 years old. The boy allegedly raped her three times in the government residential school in Ilakal taluk of the Bagalkot district as well as in a nearby field.

A case has been registered under the POCSO Act.

The parents recently became suspicious of the girl and took her to the hospital for examination. The doctors then confirmed that the girl was pregnant.

The police subsequently launched a suo motu investigation and questioned the family, which is when the girl's father filed a complaint.

Shashidhar Kosambe, Member, State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR), told Salar News, "Since the boy is a minor, he will be considered a child in conflict with the law..... The child, who is in legal trouble, has been told to be produced before the Juvenile Justice Board on Monday. It has also been decided to register a spontaneous case with the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights."

Superintendent of Police Siddharth Goyal told Salar, "The incidents reportedly took place within the hostel premises as well as later in an isolated agricultural field."

—*Salar News*

Man rapes 5-year-old daughter

A woman filed a complaint to the Vijaypura Women police accusing her husband of raping her 5-year-old daughter. The incident occurred on Saturday when the father took the victim and her sister to a Ganesha festival. The girl narrated the incident to her mother, and the following day doctors confirmed rape.

GP Prez booked for child marriage

Yamakanamaradi police filed a POCSO case against Basapur Gram Panchayat President Bhimashi Kalimani for marrying a 15-year-old girl. Kalimani married the girl on 5 Nov, 2023 who delivered a baby five months ago. He had also tried in vain to change her year of birth from her school records. -*Salar News*

UT Khader: Need to cultivate leadership

Speaker UT Khader tilling a field **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

State Legislative Assembly Speaker UT Khader emphasised the need to cultivate leadership, service, and patriotism together at the President's Awards ceremony of Bharat Scouts and Guides in New Delhi. He urged the students present to realise their responsibilities and dedicate themselves with renewed commitment.

"Seeing the enthusiastic, confident, and determined youth gathered here, I feel immense hope and pride for the future of India," Khader said. "You are the pillars of this great nation, the very foundation upon which India is being recognised across the world as stronger, brighter, and more progressive."

Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, he said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world".

He added, "The journey of scouting and guiding is a beautiful blend of 'Seva' (Service), 'Sanskar' (Values), and 'Sahyog' (Teamwork). These three pillars act as a powerful framework for the total personality development of an individual. In short, this is a transformative journey from the 'Self ' to the 'Service of others'.... You are really an inspiration to millions". —*Salar News*

PHOTO: PTI

RCB introduces 'RCB CARES' for fan safety

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) has unveiled its "RCB CARES" initiative, aimed at bolstering fan safety and aiding community development. Announced on Monday, the programme builds on a previous commitment, following the tragic stampede that claimed 11 lives during the team's IPL trophy celebrations in June.

RCB has pledged Rs 25 lakh in financial aid to the families of the victims and aims to "support, empower, and elevate our 12th Man Army through meaningful action." The foundation plans to collaborate closely with the BCCI and the Karnataka State Cricket Association to develop improved crowd management protocols.

"Our agenda includes providing support that goes beyond financial aid," RCB stated, outlining a six-point strategy that encompasses a fan-safety audit framework, training for on-ground partners, and investment in independent research on crowd safety.

Additionally, RCB intends to honour passionate fans with a dedicated space in Bengaluru and create in-stadia jobs while nurturing local talent. This long-term strategy reflects RCB's commitment to fan welfare and community engagement following the June tragedy. —*Agencies*

OVERNIGHT SHOCK

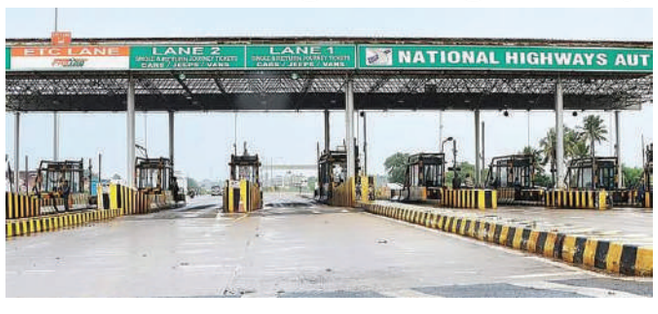
Toll rates hiked along 2 highways near City

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

Commuters using National Highway 75 between Nelamangala and Hassan woke up to a toll hike shock on Monday. Starting midnight, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) implemented revised toll rates at two major plazas — Doddakarenahalli and Karbailu.

The hikes, enforced by Nelamangala Devihalli Expressway Pvt. Ltd, have increased the financial burden on everyday road users and transporters alike.

It increased the one-way toll for cars/jeeps/van with FASTag from Rs 55 to Rs 60 and from Rs 85 to Rs 90 for return/day pass. For the same class of vehicles without FASTag, the toll was increased by Rs 10, or from 110 to Rs 120 for one-way toll.



With fuel prices already high and cost-of-living concerns growing, the latest toll revision has left regular commuters and freight operators fuming. People believe that the added toll burden will eventually hike up prices of essential goods due to rising transportation costs.

"There seems to be no end to the shocks — every other day there's a hike in something," said a frustrated daily commuter. "This will hit not just vehicle owners but also small traders and rural passengers who rely on these roads."

The revised toll is likely to ripple through logistics, retail, and farming sectors that depend heavily on NH-75 for supply movement. —*Salar News*

Pralhad flays govt for property registration hike

HUBBALLI, 1 SEPT

Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Pralhad Joshi, has condemned the Siddaramaiah-led State government for its decision to double property registration fees. Speaking to reporters, Joshi described the increased registration charge as "highly condemnable" and called for its immediate withdrawal.

"They have increased the registration charge for properties... In the last two years, they have also raised VAT on petrol and diesel twice," Joshi stated. He highlighted that the government has previously increased fees for vehicle registration, birth and death certificates, among other charges.

He added, "Corruption has increased..... It is so rampant that you can't even imagine."

The rise in registration fees comes amidst the government's reported borrowing of nearly Rs 63,000 crore to fund various guarantee schemes. —*ANI*

PHOTO: PTI

Infiltration bid foiled along LoC in J&K's Poonch

MENDHAR/JAMMU, 1 SEPT

The Indian Army troops on Monday scuttled an infiltration bid by terrorists along the Line of Control (LoC) in Mendhar Sector of Poonch district, officials said. Troops guarding the border noticed a group of terrorists trying to sneak into the country from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, they said. The movement was noticed near Dabbi village of Balakote area in the early hours of the day. Heavy gunfire was exchanged between the two sides. The whole area has been cordoned off, and a massive search operation is underway, officials said. *—PTI*

Canada PM praises Telangana temple services

HYDERABAD, 1 SEPT

The Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple in Yadagirigutta, Telangana, has received international recognition from Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney. The accolade was delivered during the Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Kalyana Mahotsavam held at the EY Centre in Ottawa, where the PM praised the contributions of Hindu Canadians to the nation's diversity and cultural strength. In a letter addressed to the temple authorities, he referred to Mahotsavam as an opportunity to "celebrate a sacred tradition, experience spiritual joy, and uphold the values of unity and community." Telangana Endowments Minister Konda Surekha expressed her delight at the temple's recognition, while Temple Executive Officer Venkata Rao conveyed his pleasure. *—PTI*

3 migrants freed from Assam after TMC's intervention

KOLKATA, 1 SEPT

Three migrant workers from West Bengal's Murshidabad district, who were allegedly detained by Assam Police on suspicion of being Bangladeshis, were released after the intervention of the overnment, a TMC MP claimed on Monday. Additionally, West Bengal Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee said CM would participate in one of the discussions on the alleged incidents of attacks on Bengali-speaking migrants in BJP-ruled states during a special session. TMC will move a censure motion during the three-day special session in assembly. *—PTI*

In win for India, SCO flays Pahalgam terror

Reiterated India's position that 'double standards' in the fight against terrorism are unacceptable

Russian President Vladimir Putin hugs Prime Minister Narendra Modi share a hug **PHOTO: PTI**

TIANJIN, 1 SEPT

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on Monday strongly condemned the Pahalgam terror attack and concurred with India's position that "double standards" in the fight against terrorism are unacceptable.

The influential grouping listed its strong resolve to combat terrorism in a declaration that was unveiled at the end of its two-day annual summit at the Chinese port city that was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russia's Vladimir Putin and many other global leaders.

The SCO member states also condemned the military strikes by Israel in Gaza as it has led to numerous casualties among the civilian population and a catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Strip.

The declaration mentioned ways to enhance regional security and identified combating terrorism as a major challenge.

The SCO member states also condemned the terror attacks in Khuzdar and on Jaffer Express, both in Pakistan's Balochistan province.

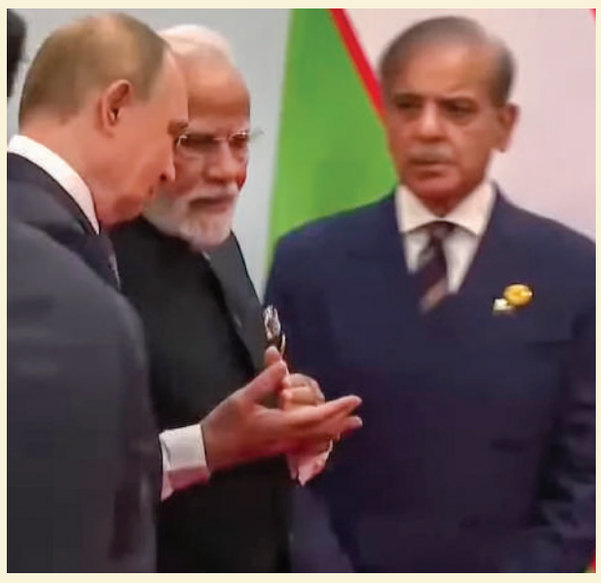
It said the SCO, while reaffirming its firm commitment to the fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism, stresses the inadmissibility of attempts to use terrorist, separatist and extremist groups for "mercenary purposes".

The SCO said it recognised the leading role of sovereign states and their competent authorities in countering terrorist and extremist threats.

The SCO said the UN has the central role to fully implement the relevant UN Security Council resolution and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in accordance with the UN Charter and the principles of international law, in order to jointly combat all terrorist groups.

Additionally, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also condemned the recent Pahalgam terror attack, labelling it an assault on India's conscience and a challenge to all who cherish humanity and urged nations to reject "double standards" in the fight against terrorism.

Modi thanked nations that supported India during its time of grief and reaffirmed India's commitment to security, connectivity, and opportunity within the SCO framework. Additionally, China had showed its support for Pakistan during war by providing drones, jets and other military aids, said sources. *—Agencies*



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Russian President Vladimir Putin while Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif looks on **PHOTO: PTI**

MEANWHILE, PAK PM GETS TROLLED

A video went viral where Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was seen running towards Russian President Vladimir Putin for a handshake which ended with him getting trolled, said sources. According to a social media user Sharif running upto Putin for a handshake while other leader were composed seemed to be a "pathetic attention-seeking behavior". While another user said "Pakistan PM insulted at SCO Summit by Host Xi himself."

Clear Mumbai roads: HC slams Jarange's Maratha quota protest

- Government shall also ensure no more protesters shall enter city henceforth, it said. As HC came down heavily on protesters for not remaining at Azad Maidan and blocking vital areas and roads in south Mumbai

MUMBAI, 1 SEPT

The Bombay High Court on Monday asked Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange's supporters to vacate all streets by Tuesday noon and restore normalcy, noting the stir was not peaceful as promised by organisers and has brought the city to a standstill.

Describing the situation as grim on the fourth day of the hunger strike by Jarange at Azad Maidan in south Mumbai, the HC, during a special hearing, observed that all pre-agitation conditions have been violated and asked protesters to stay within confines of the designated area for stir.

A bench of Justices Ravindra Ghuge and Gautam Ankhad stated that since the protesters do not have valid permission to continue the stir, it expects the Maharashtra government to follow the due procedure laid down in law by initiating appropriate steps.Government shall also ensure no more protesters shall enter city henceforth, it said.

As the HC came down heavily on protesters for not remaining at Azad Maidan and blocking vital areas and roads in south Mumbai.

Jarange, who is demanding inclusion of Marathas in the OBC category for reservation benefits, stopped drinking water in the afternoon, but took some sips in the evening while addressing his supporters after the HC directives.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said his administration will implement the HC directives on the Maratha quota protest and added the Mahayuti government is deliberating on finding legal options to resolve the standoff.

During hearing, HC asked Jarange & his supporters to ensure all streets are vacated by Tuesday noon. *—PTI*

Will drop hydrogen bomb soon: RaGa

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, LoP in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav and others during a march marking culmination of 'Vote Adhikar Yatra' in Patna on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

PATNA, 1 SEPT

- Speaking at the concluding event of his 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' here, Gandhi said Bihar, being a revolutionary state, has given a message to the country about "vote chori."

Days after accusing the BJP of stealing elections, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday threatened that he will soon amplify his charges by coming out with more "vote chori" disclosures that would be like a "Hydrogen bomb" and Prime Minister Narendra Modi would not be able to show his face to the country.

Speaking at the concluding event of his 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' here, Gandhi said Bihar, being a revolutionary state, has given a message to the country about "vote chori" and will not allow such malpractice.

Alleging that the forces that killed Mahatma Gandhi are now trying to "murder" democracy and the Constitution, he claimed that the opposition INDIA bloc would not allow them to do so.

With this, the 15-day Voter Adhikar Yatra in poll-bound Bihar, which started from Sasaram on 17 August, ended with a boisterous response from workers of the Congress, RJD and Left parties that displayed their strength on the streets of Patna on the last day on Monday.

Gandhi was joined by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, Vikassheel Insan Party chief Mukesh Sahani, CPI(M) general secretary M A Baby, CPI (ML) Liberation general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya, CPI's Annie Raja, TMC MP Yusuf Pathan, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut and other INDIA bloc leaders.

"We pledge - not even a single vote will be stolen in Bihar. We will protect democracy and the Constitution with all our might," Gandhi said. The march in Patna started with the leaders offering floral tributes at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the Gandhi Maidan and ended with Rahul Gandhi paying floral tributes at the statue of BR Ambedkar located at a park here. *—PTI*

This BJP-RSS will dump you (Nitish) where garbage is dumped

-Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress President

The Bihar CM has become 'Bhishma Pitamaha' of corruption and he should not speak about irregularities

-Tejashwi Yadav, RJD leader

The SP (Akhilesh Yadav) leader's condition in the utterly unsuccessful voter rights march in Bihar was that of being 'na teen mein na terah mein (meaning to be of no significance or relevance)'

- Keshav Prasad Maurya, UP DyCM

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee arrives after Indian Army personnel allegedly dismantled the party's stage erected beside the Gandhi statue at Maidan area, in Kolkata, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Army stops TMC stir, Didi fumes

KOLKATA, 1 SEPT

West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee on Monday accused the Centre of "misusing" the Indian Army to dismantle a stage erected here to protest alleged atrocities on Bengali-speaking migrant workers in BJP-ruled states.

The Indian Army had begun the dismantling of the TMC's stage erected beside the Gandhi statue in the Maidan area in central Kolkata on grounds that the party had overshot the programme's permission tenure when Banerjee rushed to the spot.

"I do not blame the Army. This is the BJP's vendetta politics. The double-engine government of the BJP is to be blamed. They are misusing the Army. This is unethical, undemocratic, and it's a shame that the BJP has stooped to such levels," Banerjee alleged while speaking to reporters from the partially dismantled structure.

The TMC was holding sit-ins at the site on Saturdays and Sundays for nearly the past one month.

The Army should have consulted the Kolkata Police before dismantling the stage, the CM maintained.

She claimed that her party paid Rs 20,000 to the defence establishment as a security deposit for the permission, adding that there was no programme of any other party at the site.

She said "200 army personnel ran from the site" once they saw her. Such actions only strengthened her resolve to strike back harder, she said. She added protests will happen on Tuesday in all blocks, wards, and districts "because of what the BJP did". *—PTI*

SIR deadline ends; 36K want names added

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

The month-long window for demanding changes to Bihar's electoral rolls has closed, with over 36,000 electors requesting to have their names added. Additionally, more than 217,000 individuals have sought the removal of names they claim were incorrectly included. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has submitted 16 objections, marking it the only recognised national party to pursue such removals. State party CPI-ML (Liberation) has requested the removal of 103 names, and both CPI-ML and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) have jointly called for 25 additions to the voters' list.

Following publication of the draft rolls on 1 August, the Election Commission (EC) confirmed that claims and objections can be filed beyond the deadline, to be considered once the final voters' list is published on 30 September. The Supreme Court, noting the "trust issue" surrounding the revision, directed the state legal services authority to assist voters with the process, accepting Aadhaar and other listed documents for verification. *—PTI*

No profits made: Puri slams Navarro

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

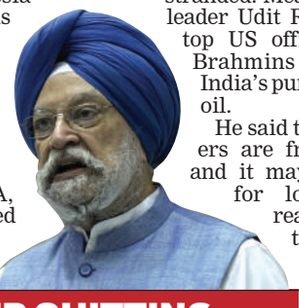
Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has dismissed White House trade adviser Peter Navarro's 'laundromat' remark, asserting that India has not violated any rules in purchasing Russian oil and its energy trade since the Ukraine war has helped stabilise global markets and keep prices in check.

Puri said India has long been the world's fourth-largest exporter of petroleum products and its export volumes and margins have remained broadly the same.

India's imports of Russian oil soared from under 1 per cent to nearly 40 per cent of total crude intake after the Ukraine war, driven by steep discounts as Western nations cut purchases to penalise Moscow. Navarro labelled the Russia-Ukraine war as "Modi's war" and accused New Delhi of funding Russian President Vladimir Putin's "war machine".

Brokerage CLSA, in a report, stated that if India halts Russian oil imports, crude prices could spike to USD 90-100 per barrel. With limited buyers for Russian crude, India's exit could leave up to 1 million barrels per day - about 1 per cent of global supply - stranded. Meanwhile Congress leader Udit Raj has backed a top US official claim that Brahmins profited from India's purchase of Russian oil.

He said that private refiners are from upper caste and it may take centuries for lower castes to reach to their position. *—PTI*



6 WEEKS AFTER QUITTING

Dhankhar shifts to Chautala's farmhouse

NEW DELHI/ CHANDIGARH, 1 SEPT

Former vice-president Jagdeep Dhankhar shifted from his official residence to a private farmhouse in the Chhatarpur area of south Delhi on Monday evening, six weeks after he resigned from his post, according to officials.

The farmhouse in the Gadaipur area of Chhatarpur belongs to INLD leader Abhay Chautala.

An official told PTI that Dhankhar will stay in the private farmhouse as an interim arrangement till he is allocated a Type-VIII official residence, which he is entitled to as a former vice-president.

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry, however, has not yet received any formal request from Dhankhar for allotment of a government bungalow, another official said.

Abhay Chautala, the son of ex-Haryana chief minister OP Chautala, confirmed that the former vice-president has moved into the farmhouse in Chhatarpur. "We have old family ties with him. He is like a family member. I don't have to offer him to stay in our house, it is his own house," the INLD leader said.

Dhankhar shared close ties with former deputy prime minister Devi Lal and his son, the ex-chief minister of Haryana Om Prakash Chautala. Devi Lal died in 2001, while O P Chautala passed away in December last year. The former vice-president had attended OP Chautala's last rites in the Khera village of Sirsa district. *—PTI*

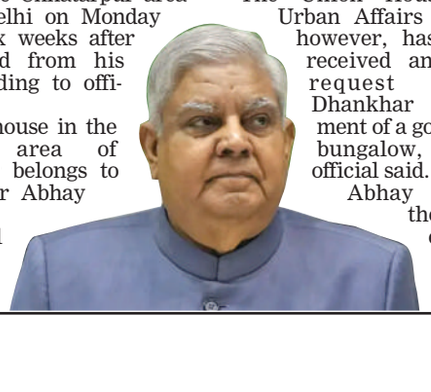


PHOTO: PTI

Nitish Katara murder: Convict's bail extended

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

The Supreme Court has extended the interim bail of Vikas Yadav by a week in the 2002 murder of Nitish Katara. A bench led by Justice M M Sundresh heard Yadav's plea following a Delhi High Court ruling on 22 August that declined to extend his bail initially granted on 29 July. After Justice N Kotiswar Singh recused himself, Yadav's lawyer argued for the bail extension due to a wedding scheduled for 5 September and the need to organise a Rs 54 lakh fine. Neelam Katara, Nitish's mother, contested this, noting Yadav's earlier marriage in July. The court observed, "It lacked the jurisdiction to grant the petitioner's prayer"—*PTI*

UP CM to fund education of kid aspiring to be doc

LUCKNOW, 1 SEPT

Mayra, a five-year-old girl from Kanpur, and her mother were delighted by their encounter with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during the 'Janata Darshan' in Lucknow. The chief minister offered assistance for Mayra's school admission, encouraging her aspiration to become a doctor. Adityanath warmly engaged with Mayra, gave her a chocolate, and instructed officials to ensure swift admission. Her mother, Neha, expressed gratitude, stating, "The chief minister patiently listened to us and assured me of my daughter's admission in a school." This follows previous interventions by Adityanath, including the admission of Vachi from Moradabad and support for Pankhuri in Gorakhpur, demonstrating his commitment to access to education.—*PTI*

4 arrested for assaulting Kerala YouTuber

IDUKKI, 1 SEPT

Four individuals have been taken into custody for allegedly assaulting YouTuber Shaja Skaria in Thodupuzha, police confirmed. The suspects were apprehended in Bengaluru with assistance from the Cyber Cell after fleeing the state post-attack on Saturday night. One accused had reportedly posted on Facebook about a potential follow-up assault, later deleting the post. "The police showed me pictures of five people, and I identified them," Skaria stated, claiming that the attack was orchestrated by CPI(M) workers, specifically naming Mathew Kollampilly and Shiyas, and describing it as "an attempt to murder me." The accused will be transported back to Thodupuzha for further questioning. The police are conducting further investigations into the case. —*PTI*

'World's longest dam in Odisha in need of repair'

BURLA, 1 SEPT

The 67-year-old Hirakud Dam, the world's longest earthen dam, is in need of a comprehensive overhaul to tackle structural issues and improve capacity, according to Sudhir Kumar Sahu, Additional Chief Engineer of the Hirakud Dam Circle. While the dam's overall integrity is sound, superficial cracks and cavities have been noted upstream. In light of this, the Central Water Commission has recommended constructing an additional spillway to manage increased water release capacity. Sahu stated that current maintenance is funded by the state, while major projects, including spillway construction and underwater treatment, are supported by the Centre. The dam plays a crucial role in flood control, irrigation, and power generation.—*PTI*

SC upholds domicile rules for T'gana medical courses

Students studying for 4 yrs till class 12 in state are eligible

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

The Supreme Court on Monday upheld the Telangana's domicile rule making only those students, who have studied for the last four years up to Class 12 in the state, eligible for admissions in medical and dental colleges under its quota.

The court allowed the appeal of the state government and its universities while upholding the Telangana Medical and Dental Colleges Admission (Admission into MBBS & BDS Courses) Rules, 2017, amended in 2024.

The rules provide for 85 per cent reservation to local students under state quota.

The high court held the state's permanent residents cannot be denied benefit of admissions in medical colleges only because they lived outside the state for sometime.

The verdict agreed to the submissions that the expansion of the definition would frustrate the special provision under Article 371D, intended to confer a benefit to those local candidates in Telangana who could be given preferential admission to the medical courses.

"At the outset, we have to state that without a definition of what constitutes residence……," the verdict said.

Agreeing with the state government, represented by senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi and advocate Sravan Kumar Karnam, the bench said the object of the classification was justified as it desired to help to some extent students who are its residents.

The state had proposed to extend the benefits of state quota to the children of employees of the Telangana government who "served or are serving outside Telangana corresponding to the candidate's year/s of study outside Telangana".

The state government had agreed to grant a one-time exception to 135 students, who moved the high court, in admissions in the medical and dental colleges in 2024. The children of retired or serving employees from the Telangana cadre of All India Services will also benefit under the amendment.

Those, who got admissions in pursuance of its previous order, will continue to study in medical colleges. —*PTI*

Rules provided safeguards for students displaced from state PHOTO: PTI

- The high court held the state's permanent residents cannot be denied benefit of admissions in medical colleges only because they lived outside the state for sometime.

Repair and restoration work underway after a landslide damaged part of Kiratpur-Manali Highway in Mandi in Himachal Pradesh PHOTO: PTI

7 die in Himachal, U'khand landslides

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Sevan people died in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh in landslides, while already flood-hit Punjab received another spell of torrential rain on Monday, leading to the closure of all schools and colleges in the state.

Three people were killed overnight in two separate incidents of landslides in Shimla.

A landslide killed Virender Kumar, 35, and his ten-year-old daughter in the Dubloo area of Junga on the outskirts of Shimla. An elderly woman, Kalawati, was buried early Monday after her house in Chol village collapsed.

In Dyal Mori village, a woman went missing, while ten people of four families were evacuated following a landslide

Train service was affected and 793 roads were closed.

Meanwhile, in Uttarakhand, a landslide near Munkatiya on the Kedarnath national highway left two people dead and six others injured on Monday. Two others were killed in separate rain-related incidents in Tehri and Pithoragarh

The Punjab government on Monday also announced closure of all colleges, universities and polytechnic institutes till 3 September due to floods. A red alert was issued in four to six districts till Tuesday.

Heavy rains led to a flood-like situation in Rajasthan's Ajmerand Jodhpur, disrupting normal life. Heavy rains were forecast in eastern Rajasthan in the next five-six days.Heavy rains were forecast in several districts of West Bengal over the next two days. P eople were asked to remain vigilant. —*PTI*

UP mosque row: SP extends status quo

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

The Supreme Court has extended its status quo order by two weeks in the Sambhal mosque dispute in Uttar Pradesh. The court heard an appeal from the Committee of Management Jami Masjid Sambhal against a plea dismissed by the Allahabad High Court. The Hindu plaintiffs opposed the extension, while the mosque management requested it until a registry report was submitted. —*PTI*

SC says no to Gateway of India jetty

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

The Supreme Court has upheld the construction of a new passenger jetty and terminal near the Gateway of India, dismissing a challenge against a Bombay High Court ruling. The 1.5-acre, Rs 229 crore project, including parking, lounges, and an amphitheatre, will be situated 280 metres from the iconic monument, sparking concerns over potential traffic congestion for locals. —*PTI*

2 more die of amoebic brain fever

KOZHIKODE, 1 SEPT

Two people, including a three-month-old infant, have died from amoebic meningoencephalitis, a rare and often fatal brain infection, while undergoing treatment at Kozhikode Medical College Hospital.

With this, the toll from the amoebic brain fever in the state reached three within August.

The deceased infant was the son of Abubacker Siddique from Omassery in this district and had been receiving treatment at the hospital for the past month. His condition worsened on 31 August, leading to his death.

The other victim, Ramla, 52, of Kappil in Malappuram district, developed symptoms on 8 July. She was initially treated at a private hospital and later shifted to Kozhikode Medical College as her condition deteriorated.

Eight other patients from Kozhikode, Malappuram, and Wayanad districts are currently undergoing treatment at the hospital.

Earlier, a nine-year-old girl from Thamarassery had succumbed to the same infection.

Amoebic meningoencephalitis is primarily contracted through swimming or bathing in contaminated water. Kerala recorded 42 cases this year. The Health Department initiated awareness campaigns in the affected districts. —*PTI*

Eight patients from Kozhikode, Malappuram and Wayanad districts are undergoing treatment at the Kozhikode Medical College PHOTO: PTI

Kerala temple elephant tramples mahout to death

ALAPPUZHA, 1 SEPT

A mahout has died and another sustained serious injuries after being trampled by a captive elephant at a temple in Haripad in Kerala's Alappuzha district.

The deceased, Muralidharan Nair, 53, of Edapponmuri, Nooranad in Alappuzha, was the chief handler of Skandan, an elephant owned by the Subrahmanya temple.

The elephant, which has been in musth, was tied at the house of the temple priest for the past few months. Musth is a condition of heightened aggression and unpredictable behaviour occurring annually in male elephants during which there will be a surge in testosterone level.

Skandan attacked another mahout, Sunil Kumar on 31 August. While Muralidharan brought the animal under control, it later pressed him to the ground with its head. He succumbed to injuries at a hospital. Sunil is undergoing treatment. —*PTI*

CBI to probe T'gana Kaleshwaram scam

Telangana CM A Revanth Reddy said that the CBI should probe the scam as central and state government depeartments were involved PHOTO: PTI

HYDERABAD, 1 SEPT

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Monday announced a CBI inquiry into the alleged irregularities in the Kaleshwaram project built during the previous BRS regime.

Reddy said CBI should probe the matter as inter-state issues, different central and state government departments and agencies are involved in the multi-purpose project on the Godavari River in Bhupalpally

The reports of National Dam Safety Authority and the judicial commission have underscored the need for an in depth probe into various issues concerning the project.

While the judicial commission identified several defects and irregularities, the NDSA report found defects in planning, design and quality to have caused the failure of the project's Medigadda barrage.

The government paid Rs 49,835 crore towards payment of principal and interest on the loan taken for the project.

Reddy alleged that the BRS government changed the location of the barrage from Thummidi Hatti to Medigadda to loot public funds.

Earlier, the BRS staged a walkout from the assembly for not being able to present its version. —*PTI*

- The reports of National Dam Safety Authority and the judicial commission have underscored the need for an in depth probe into various issues concerning the state's Kaleshwaram project.

Blast acquittal order read at man's grave

NAGPUR, 1 SEPT

The family members of Kamal Ahmad Vakil Ahmad Ansari, who died awaiting justice in the 2006 Mumbai train blasts case, have read aloud the Bombay High Court's acquittal order at his grave, publicly affirming that he was innocent.

Ansari's family members and community members visited his grave here on Sunday, demanded accountability from the system.

However, Ansari could not celebrate his acquittal as he passed away in a Nagpur jail in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ansari hailed from Bihar's Madhubani and ran a small chicken shop "He languished in prison for 16 years, his dignity stripped, his family stigmatised, and his pleas unheard," said Abdul Wahid Sheikh, general secretary of Innocence Network. His kids grew up without a father and his wife suffered. —*PTI*

Kin of Kamal Ansari read out the HC acquittal order at his grave in Mumbai, to proclaim his innocence in the Mumbai train blasts in 2006 PHOTO: X

Grasslands in national park in Assam shrink by 50%

GUWAHATI, 1 SEPT

Grasslands in Assam's Manas National Park have diminished by nearly 50 per cent over the past three decades, primarily due to climate change and human activities.

Field director C Ramesh highlighted that this alarming trend has accelerated the natural succession process, concentrating herbivorous animals in dwindling grassland areas. The park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, hosts a rich variety of species, including the greater one-horned rhino and Bengal florican.

Biotic and abiotic factors, including invasive species and variable weather patterns, contribute to this decline, experts said. —*PTI*

WhatsApp scam: Fraudster poses as police chief

KOLLAM, 1 SEPT

Kerala Police are investigating a cyber fraud incident where an impersonator posed as the district police chief on WhatsApp, attempting to solicit money from officers.

The scam unfolded when several Kollam Rural Police officials received urgent requests for Rs 40,000 from a WhatsApp account featuring a profile picture of district police chief Vishu Pratheep TK.

Fortunately, alert officers recognised the fraudulent attempt and promptly informed senior officials, preventing any financial loss. The cyber police station has since filed a case under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Information Technology Act.

Investigators are tracing the account linked to the request, which had connections to other cyber frauds. Kerala has experienced a rise in such scams, with criminals frequently impersonating senior officials to exploit his victims. —*PTI*

BENGAL TEACHER ASSAULTED BY POLICE

KOLKATA, 1 SEPT

Suman Biswas, a key face of the protesting teachers, on Monday alleged that police roughed him up at Karunamoyee Metro station here despite an immunity order from the Calcutta High Court.

He claimed that his kurta was torn, his mobile phone broken while being assaulted by officers in plainclothes.

The scuffle was streamed live on social media. The high court allowed him and four other representatives to visit the WBSSC headquarters.

Meanwhile, police were deployed across Salt Lake to prevent any rally, which Biswas tried to mobilise.

The police also "raided" his home in Bandel on 31 August.

The SSC job aspirants demanded that no fresh recruitment exams be held. BJP Suvendu Adhikari said that "clean teachers" should be reinstated. —*PTI*

UNITING HEARTS

M'rashtra mosque celebrates Ganesha festival

SANGLI, 1 SEPT

A village here in Maharashtra has been witnessing a unique Ganesh festival celebration for more than four decades with the installation of the elephant-headed God's idol in a mosque.

Religious tensions elsewhere have never impacted the residents of Gotkhindi village in Sangli district, having a population of nearly 15,000, including 100 families belonging to the Muslim community, a local Ganesh mandal founder, Ashok Patil said.

Muslims are also members of the mandal. They participate in the preparation of 'prasad' (offering), join in prayers and assist in the festival arrangements, he said.

The tradition began in 1980 when members of the Hindu and Muslim communities decided to move a Ganpati idol inside a mosque at Gotkhindi village in Sangli district due to heavy rains, he said.

"The New Ganesh Tarun Mandal at Jhunjar Chowk in the village was set up in 1980," Patil said.

The idol is kept in the mosque for the 10-day celebration and then immersed in a local water body during the culmination of the festival on Anant Chaturdashi.

Once Bakr-Id and Ganesh Chaturthi dates coincided, prompting the Muslims to celebrate their festival only by offering namaz and not 'qurbani', Patil said. "They even avoid meat during Hindu festivals," he added.

"The entire country should take inspiration from the social and religious harmony here," he said.The local police and tehsildar are invited for the 'pran pratistha' (consecration) of the Ganesh idol every year.The 10-day Ganpati festival began on 27 August. —*PTI*

People with an idol of Lord Ganesh at a mosque during the Ganesh festival celebrations, in Sangli in Maharashtra on Monday PHOTO: PTI

PAINT THE TOWN

Volunteers paint flower pots placed along the footpath near the High Court in Bengaluru on Monday, as part of a beautification initiative by the Horticulture Department
PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

China unites unlikely allies at SCO amid Trump's turmoil

The leaders of Russia, China, India and seven other nations met on Monday in northern China for the latest annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in what could be an emerging challenge to America's global leadership.

The 10-member SCO, which gathered in the port city of Tianjin, has grown in size and influence since its founding 24 years ago, even while its goals and programs remain murky and name recognition low. The SCO counts some clear US foes among its members The full membership also includes Belarus, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Originally seen as a foil to US influence in Central Asia, the organization expanded to include India and Pakistan in 2017, Iran in 2023 and Belarus in 2024. Some of those are clear foes of the West, especially Iran and close Russian ally Belarus. Others including India, China and Russia have a more nebulous relationship, given Washington's wobbly stance on Russia's war with Ukraine and the US tariffs that have upended trading relationships with countries such as China and India.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese leader Xi Jinping are seen chatting and laughing at the SCO summit in Tianjin
PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

From a regional bloc to a broader alliance

Since its 2001 founding, the SCO primarily has been dominated by China, the regional economic superpower, with Russia seeking to use the group to maintain its influence over former Central Asian Soviet republics Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. While Russia's economic influence has declined steadily, especially under increasingly severe Western sanctions, both Russia and China have used the alliance as a framework for regional military cooperation, albeit limited to joint drills and firing competitions.

Belarus, Iran, Pakistan and India joined later in an apparent attempt to share in the SCO's budding influence, though the value of their membership is debatable. Iran and Belarus have faced international condemnation over sanctions and human rights violations, while Pakistan is highly dependent on China for military hardware.

Group showcases Xi Jinping's multipolarity vision

University of Chicago political scientist Dali Yang said the SCO is one of the most prominent regional organizations China has co-founded. "For China's leadership, there is a lot of emphasis on maintaining existing relations in the international arena even though the SCO has not been effective in dealing with the major challenges of today," Yang said.

The SCO seems to want to move from being a dialogue platform to a "full-fledged mechanism of practical cooperation that brings tangible results to the citizens of the member states," said June Teufel Dreyer, a University of Miami expert on Chinese politics. Yet the questions remain, "to what end and how?" For China's President Xi Jinping, "presiding over the gathering in Tianjin should net him some favorable publicity and possibly further his image as leader of a new global world order," Dreyer said.

India's entry could change the equation

Since the Russia-Ukraine war began, India has become a major buyer of Russian oil, increasing tensions with Washington. Modi also remarked on "steady progress" in improving relations with China after meeting its top diplomat in August and noted "respect for each other's interests and sensitiveness." India's SCO entry potentially challenges Russian and Chinese domination over the association.

Despite their trade ties, India is unlikely to offer meaningful support for Russia's war in Ukraine or China's claims to Taiwan and the South China Sea.

India has also long sought a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council but has received only tepid backing from China and Russia, possibly to prevent their influence with the West from being diluted. Still, New Delhi stands to lose little as long as Washington continues to broadcast uncertainty with its foreign trade.

India refused to sign a joint statement at an SCO defense ministers meeting in June because it saw a pro-Pakistan stance in the omission of a mention of a deadly 22 April mass shooting of tourists in Indian-controlled Kashmir.

Many of the leaders are attending a military parade in Beijing.

The official Xinhua News Agency called the Tianjin gathering the "largest-ever SCO summit in history" and said it would chart "the blueprint for the bloc's next decade of development." The leaders of about a dozen other countries joined the summit as dialogue partners or guests, including Egypt, Nepal and several Southeast Asian nations. Citing growing trade and rail freight between China and other members, observer states and dialogue partners, Beijing seems eager to emphasize the bloc's economic benefits.

Documents being signed Monday included a statement on the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, which China's ruling Communist Party will mark with a military parade in central Beijing on 3 September.

Many of the same leaders will attend the parade, where North Korea's Kim Jong Un will make a rare overseas appearance. *—PTI*

SALAR ساہر

Act on climate crisis before it's too late: COP30 Chief

The world risks "running out of time" to act on climate change without cooperation, COP30 President Andre Correa do Lago warned on Monday and stressed on the need to bridge the political and financial divide between developed and developing nations.

He also criticised US President Donald Trump's reluctance to engage in climate negotiations. "We understand that President Trump is not going to listen to me. And the problem is that he does not want to talk about the emissions of specific countries," Correa do Lago told reporters.

Trump has withdrawn the United States from the Paris Agreement on climate change. This is the second time he has directed the US to exit the agreement. He had done so during his first administration and the US rejoined under the Biden administration.

Correa do Lago acknowledged that climate negotiations have long been marked by a sharp divide between developed and developing nations.

"The problem of the negotiation of climate change since the beginning is divided very much the developed countries and the developing countries, because the developing countries insist very much on the necessity of the rich countries to provide the way for developing countries to have a cleaner development," he said.

"And on the other side, developed countries only want commitments from the developing countries without giving the means to evolve. So this divide is very strong," he said.

He stressed that bridging the gap is urgent.

"We have to try to bridge that, because science tells us we have very little time. The world risks running out of time to act on climate change without cooperation between developed and developing countries," he said.

"So I think that we have to start to think that the main issue is not to be right, but the main issue is really to combat climate change and to have an effective way of making development something that is cleaner and to bring jobs, to bring new jobs, and to improve the quality of life of people."

Noting that the challenge is immense, Correa do Lago said the scale of climate change makes it impossible to address financial and structural issues in the same way it was thought possible 30 years ago.

"Today, climate change is impacting the entire global economy. Most of our activities will need to be transformed. This is not just about environmental action but it is about investment, innovation, and building a new economy," he said.

"Ultimately, climate change demands economic solutions. Our countries are rich in talent, entrepreneurs, and capable governments who can imagine and lead this new path of development," he said.

He also said that COP30 has to be a meeting of the entire world corresponding to the seriousness of the situation.

"This is not just about climate change this time. This will have an impact on jobs, economy. We need to exchange many plans and ideas with the government as well as the civil society," he said.

COP30, scheduled to take place in Belem, Brazil, in November 2025, will mark the first time the UN climate summit is hosted in the Amazon region.

"The agenda started with pollution. Now we talk about climate change, which is a much bigger and more complex phenomenon. But the first direct impact on people is pollution," he said, recalling how it spurred movements in Europe and the United States in the 1960s and 1970s.

Citing progress in Brazil and India, he highlighted Sao Paulo's "amazing" reductions in air pollution through biofuels and noted India is taking similar steps. However, he acknowledged such solutions can be expensive and called for international cooperation to make them affordable.

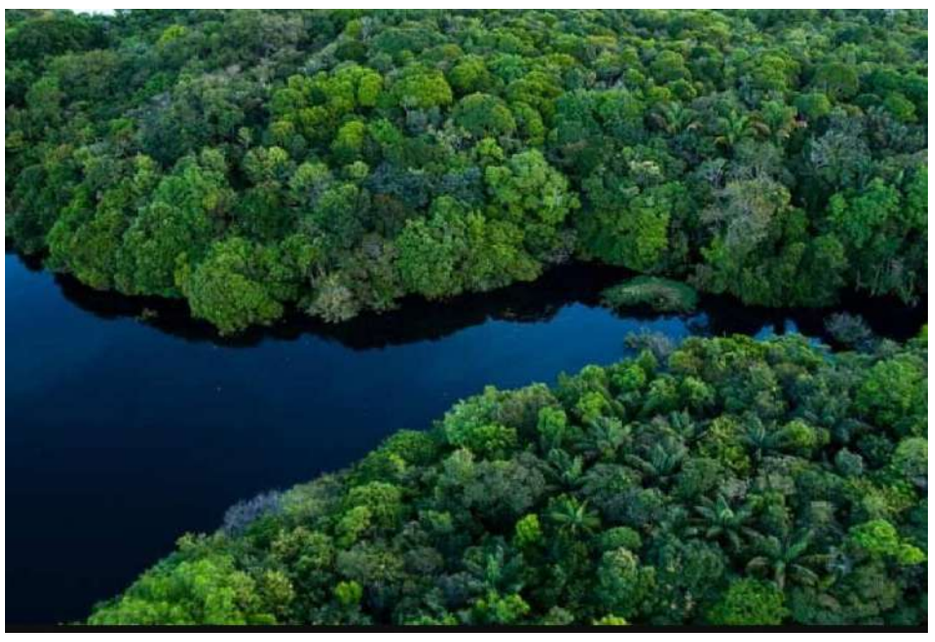
COP30 CEO Ana Toni echoed Lago's message, saying that pollution control offers an opportunity to link health and climate goals.

"At COP30, what we're trying to achieve is really accelerating actions that help both development, the well-being of people and prosperity," she said.

She pointed in particular to air quality and methane reduction as key areas of focus, noting that cleaner transport in developing countries could simultaneously tackle poverty, protect children's health, and cut emissions.

"Air pollution and transportation in our cities are not just environmental issues, they are central to development and public health," Toni added.

Leaders and negotiators from nearly 200 countries are expected to assess progress since the Paris Agreement and push for stronger commitments to cut emissions, finance adaptation, and support developing nations in transitioning to clean energy when they meet in Brazil. *—PTI*



COP30, scheduled to take place in Belem, Brazil, in November, will mark the first time the UN climate summit is hosted in the Amazon region
PHOTO: PTI

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

As Guatemalan kids sit in planes, judge orders they stay in US for now

In a dramatic overnight legal battle that unfolded over a holiday weekend, a US federal judge temporarily halted the deportation of nearly 700 unaccompanied Guatemalan children, some of whom were already seated on planes awaiting removal.

The emergency ruling came from U.S. District Judge Sparkle L Sooknanan, who was awakened at 2.30am on Sunday to respond to an urgent filing by attorneys representing the children. The legal team argued that the U.S. government was violating both constitutional protections and federal law by deporting vulnerable migrant children without due process, potentially returning them to dangerous conditions.

"I do not want there to be any ambiguity," said Judge Sooknanan during a midday hearing. "Absent action by the courts, all of those children would have been returned to Guatemala, potentially to very dangerous situations."

Legal drama on the tarmac

As the courtroom proceedings unfolded in Washington, events on the ground in Texas moved at breakneck speed. At Valley International Airport in Harlingen, a known hub for deportation flights, five charter buses pulled up to a government aircraft just minutes after the judge's order. Hours earlier, witnesses had observed dozens of children, reportedly around 50, being escorted toward a plane. They wore coloured clothing typical of those held in government shelters for migrant children.

Government lawyer Drew Ensign admitted that one of the planes may have briefly taken off before returning.

"This idea that on a long weekend in the dead of night they would wake up these vulnerable children and put them on a plane irrespective of the constitutional protections that they had is something that should shock the conscience of all Americans," said Kica Matos, president of the National Immigration Law Center, which represents several of the children.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Claims of danger and misrepresentation

According to court filings, many of the children at risk of deportation have experienced abuse, neglect, or threats in Guatemala. A 10-year-old stated, "I do not have any family in Guatemala that can take good care of me," while a 16-year-old wrote of "threats against my life" if returned.

Another girl, an honours student living in a New York shelter, said she is "deeply afraid of being deported" and has no memory of living in Guatemala.

Trapped for hours on the plane, dozens of children were eventually led off as they waited anxiously for the judgment to be delivered
PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

Lawyers for some of the children have disputed the U.S. government's claim that it was reuniting the minors with families in Guatemala at the request of the Guatemalan government. One 16-year-old's parents reportedly received a strange phone call from someone claiming she would be deported — with no warning or legal notification.

In a related Arizona case, the Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project represents a 12-year-old asylum-seeker with chronic kidney disease who requires dialysis and a future transplant. Other plaintiffs include a 10-year-old boy and his 3-year-old sister, both of whom lack family in Guatemala.

Government justification

White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller defended the deportations on social media, stating that the Guatemalan government formally requested the return of the children and that the judge was "refusing to let them reunify with their parents."

Guatemala later confirmed that it had proposed the transfer of the minors during U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem's July visit, expressing concern that many children were ageing out of juvenile facilities and risked transfer to adult detention. However, the Guatemalan government stressed that all returns should follow "established protocols and due process."

Meanwhile, families gathered at an airbase in Guatemala City, anticipating the arrival of relatives. Gilberto López said he drove overnight after his 17-year-old nephew called from Texas at midnight to say he was being deported. The boy had left Guatemala at age 15 and was detained about a month ago.

Legal and ethical concerns

The National Center for Youth Law reported that agents from Homeland Security Investigations had recently been questioning Guatemalan children in government-run shelters about their families in Guatemala. This raised red flags for legal advocates, especially as reports emerged late last week that children's court hearings were being suddenly cancelled.

On Saturday evening, the Acacia Center for Justice said it received notification that a list of Guatemalan children slated for removal had been finalised. Flights were reportedly scheduled from Harlingen and El Paso, Texas.

The swift action taken by the Trump administration echoes a similar deportation controversy from March, when hundreds of Venezuelans were flown to a maximum-security prison in El Salvador despite an attempted judicial intervention. In that instance, a judge's order came too late to halt the flights.

Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon raised concerns in a letter on Friday, stating the administration intended to remove nearly 700 Guatemalan children who had arrived unaccompanied at the border.

Migrant children without guardians are typically handed over to the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement, where they live in shelters or foster care until they can be released to US-based sponsors, usually relatives. Many apply for asylum or pursue other legal avenues to remain in the country.

For now, the judge's temporary injunction ensures that the Guatemalan children remain in the US for at least two weeks while legal proceedings continue, and as the fight between immigration enforcement and human rights protections plays out once again in America's courts. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

2M displaced by severe flooding in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 1 SEPT

Federal Minister for Climate Change Musadik Malik has reported that nearly two million people have been displaced due to severe flooding, with the poorest families bearing the brunt of the disaster. He urged the nation to unite in providing urgent assistance, stating, "The government's immediate focus is on supporting the most vulnerable populations." Joining him, NDMA Chairman Inam Haider Malik emphasised the need for rapid relief, including food, medicine, and clean water, while maintaining vigilance against disease outbreaks in crowded camps. Although Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is abroad, he is receiving daily briefings on relief measures. Malik said aid distributions was ongoing for affected families. *—ANI*

Five killed in helicopter crash in Gilgit-Baltistan

ISLAMABAD, 1 SEPT

A helicopter crash in the Chilas area of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir's Gilgit-Baltistan resulted in the deaths of five crew members, including two pilots, on Monday. Faizullah Faraq, a spokesperson for the Gilgit-Baltistan government, confirmed the incident, stating, "One of our helicopters has crashed in Thor, Chilas," with the crew comprising two pilots and three technical staff. Diamer Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Abdul Hameed reported that the casualties occurred during a test landing at a newly-proposed helipad. The exact cause of the crash remains unknown, marking it as the second such incident in recent weeks following a Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government helicopter crash last month. *—PTI*

Tech CEO steals cap meant for child, defends himself

WASHINGTON, 1 SEPT

A video of Piotr Szczerek, the CEO of the Polish company Drogbruk, went viral after he snatched a signed cap Kamil Majchrzak was giving to a child by a tennis player during the ongoing US Open tournament, triggering massive backlash. He allegedly responded to the controversy by saying, "let's not make a global scandal out of the hat" and threatened to sue those making offensive comments. However, his social media accounts have since been deactivated. The incident occurred when Majchrzak, after winning a match, tried to give the cap to Brock, a young fan. However, before Brock could receive it, Szczerek grabbed the cap and put it in his partner's bag. Szczerek defended himself: "Yes, I did it quickly. But as I've always said, life is first come, first served."*—Agencies*

Nepal ends solo expeditions on 8,000m peaks

KATHMANDU, 1 SEPT

A new regulation prohibiting solo expeditions on 8,000-metre peaks has officially taken effect in Nepal. The Sixth Amendment to the mountaineering regulations bars climbers from solo attempts, mandating that every two team members must be accompanied by at least one mountain guide. This rule applies to all the mountains over 8,000m, including Mount Everest. Additionally, the climbing fees have increased significantly, with the Everest spring season royalty rising from USD 11,000 to USD 15,000 per person. As part of these changes, the climbers must also transport their waste, including human waste, back to base camp for proper disposal, highlighting the government's commitment to environmental preservation. *—ANI*

Thousands trapped in Afghan rubble

The homes were built with mud and timber

TIANJIN, 1 SEPT

Grief and desperation mount in eastern Afghanistan after the devastating earthquake levelled entire villages, killed at least 800 people, with many more feared trapped under rubble.

World Vision and Unicef report that entire villages in Chawki and Nurgal have been obliterated. Hundreds of homes, built with mud and timber, collapsed, trapping families.

The 6.0 magnitude quake struck late Sunday in Kunar province, near Jalalabad in neighbouring Nangarhar, with a depth of only 8km, amplifying the destruction. Remote, mountainous terrain has hindered rescue efforts, worsened communications, and delayed the reporting of casualties.

In Nurgal district, one of the worst-hit areas, a resident said, "Children, the elderly, the young, all are buried. We need help. No one is here to remove the dead."

Sadiqullah, who lives in the Maza Dara area of Nurgal, said he was woken by a deep boom that sounded like a big storm approaching. Like many Afghans, he uses only one name.

He ran to where his children were sleeping and rescued three of them. He was about to return to grab the rest of his family when the room fell on top of him.

The Kunar province was hit the hardest by the 6.0 earthquake in Afghanistan on Monday **PHOTO: BNA**

"I was half-buried and unable to get out," he told The Associated Press by phone from Nangarhar Hospital. "My wife and two sons are dead and my father is injured and in hospital with me. We were trapped for three to four hours until people from other areas arrived and pulled me out."

Eyewitnesses reported hearing homes collapse and screams for help echoing through the night. Emergency teams from Kunar, Nangarhar, and Kabul are on the ground, but many areas remain inaccessible. Health ministry spokesman Sharafat Zaman warned casualty numbers are expected to rise.

Nearby Jalalabad, a major trade hub and agricultural centre near the Pakistan border, has also felt the impact. Many quake victims are believed to be returnees from Iran and Pakistan, forcibly deported in recent years. A Nurgal official said entire families that had resettled now find themselves in ruins once again.

This disaster follows a 6.3 magnitude quake in October 2023, which killed thousands, the Taliban citing 4,000 dead, though the UN estimated 1,500. *—PTI*

AT SCO SUMMIT

Fight cold war mentality: Xi

TIANJIN, 1 SEPT

Chinese President Xi Jinping called for safeguarding a UN-centred international system, opposing bloc confrontation and bullying practices to the members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

Addressing the 25th meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO in Tianjin, Xi said, "We must promote a correct historical perspective on World War II, and oppose the Cold War mentality, bloc confrontation and bullying practices".

The comments were a veiled swipe at US President Donald Trump.

Calling on the countries to seek common ground while putting aside differences, Xi urged member states to respect differences, maintain strategic communication, build up consensus, and strengthen solidarity and collaboration.

He also called for the creation of a SCO development bank, considering the growing appeal of the 10-nation bloc.

Xi also pledged to provide 2 billion yuan in grants to the member states, according to state-media Xinhua.

Xi pledged to provide 2 billion yuan (about USD 281 million) in grants to member states of the SCO within this year and added that China will also issue an additional 10 billion yuan in loans to the member banks of the SCO Interbank Consortium over the next three years. *—ANI/PTI*

Russian President Vladimir Putin with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the SCO summit in Tianjin, China on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

> **Without Tariffs, and all of the TRILLIONS OF DOLLARS we have already taken in, our Country would be completely destroyed, and our military power would be instantly obliterated.... In many ways, we would become a Third World Nation, with no hope of GREATNESS again.**
>
> —Donald Trump, US President

Ukraine war is West's fault: Putin

TIANJIN, 1 SEPT

- Putin said that the 2014 protests that resulted in then Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych forced Russia into the war. Yanukovych was a pro-Russian president

The West's constant attempts to draw Kiev into NATO is one of the main causes of the Ukrainian conflict, Russian President Vladimir Putin said at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit.

Putin claimed that the "crisis in Ukraine did not arise as result of 'invasion,' but as a result of a coup d'etat in Kyiv in 2014, supported by Ukraine's western allies", according to state media TASS.

In February 2014, deadly clashes between protesters and state forces in the capital Kyiv culminated in the ousting of then president Viktor Yanukovych.

According to the Russian President, "as a result of the coup in 2014, the political leadership of the country that did not support Ukraine's accession to NATO was removed".

Putin arrived here on Sunday to take part in the summit of the 10-member bloc.

"The second reason for the crisis is the West's constant attempts to draw Ukraine into NATO. As we have repeatedly emphasised, this poses a direct threat to Russia's security," he added.

Thanking China and India – Russia's largest oil buyers - for their support and efforts to "facilitate the resolution of the Ukrainian crisis", Putin said that he reached an "understanding" with US President Donald Trump during their recent Alaska summit.

"I hope, moving in this direction, opening the way to peace in Ukraine," he said. *—PTI with agencies*

Kim prepares for Putin, Xi meet by inspecting rockets

SEOUL, 1 SEPT

North Korea leader Kim Jong Un inspected a new weapons factory to ahead his visit to Beijing to attend a military parade along with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin. The weapon factory is key to his plan to accelerate mass production of missiles.

Both China and North Korea confirmed last week that Kim will make his first visit to China in six years to attend a military parade in Beijing on Wednesday, which marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and China's resistance against Japanese wartime aggression.

Putin has received major wartime support from North Korea. Kim recently paid tributes to the North Korean soldiers who died in the Russia-Ukraine battle.

Experts say Kim's presence at the multilateral event in Beijing is part of efforts to develop partnerships with other nations close to China and Russia.

Meanwhile, China remains North Korea's largest trade partner and economic lifeline.

The Beijing event, which will see 26 foreign leaders participate, is also a show of three-way alignment against US efforts to strengthen security cooperation with South Korea and Japan. *—PTI*

US looking to take control of Gaza: Report

The 38-page plan envisions a temporary relocation of all of Gaza's more than 2 million population **PHOTO: PTI**

WASHINGTON, 1 SEPT

The US is looking to take control of Palestinian territory in Gaza, according to a plan under the Trump administration seen by the Washington Post.

The enclave would be transformed into a trusteeship administered by the US for at least 10 years, the newspaper said.

The 38-page plan envisions a temporary relocation of all of Gaza's more than 2 million population, either through "voluntary" departures to another country or into restricted, secured zones inside the enclave.

Anyone who owns land would be offered a "digital token" in exchange for rights to redevelop their property. Each Palestinian who left would be provided with $5,000 in cash and subsidies to cover four years of rent. They would also be provided with a year of food, the Post added.

The Post said the plan is called the "Gaza Reconstitution, Economic Acceleration and Transformation Trust, or GREAT Trust," and was developed by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), the American-backed aid distributing organisation in the enclave.

In early August, the UN said at least 1,000 people were killed near GHF aid sites, since the organisation began operating in May 2025.

Another goal of the plan was modelled on President Donald Trump's vision of making the enclave the "Riviera of the Middle East". The plan is to turn the Strip into a tourism resort and high-tech hub, said the Post. *—Salar News with Agencies*

Houthis raid UN offices in Yemen, detain 11

CAIRO, 31 AUG

Yemen's Houthis on Sunday raided offices of the United Nations' food, health and children's agencies in Yemen's capital, detaining 11 UN employees, officials said. The rebels tightened security across Sanaa after Israel killed their prime minister and several Cabinet members.

Abeer Etefa, a spokesperson for the World Food Program, said that security forces raided the agencies' offices in the Houthi-controlled capital on Sunday morning. Also raided were offices of the World Health Organisation and UNICEF, according to a UN official and a Houthi official. The UN official said armed forces raided the offices and questioned employees.

On Monday, the Houthi's said they launched a missile at an oil tanker off the coast of Saudi Arabia in the Red Sea, potentially renewing their attacks targeting shipping through the crucial global waterway. Houthi military spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree alleged the vessel, the Scarlet Ray, had ties to Israel. *—PTI*

Indonesian politicians' perks cut

JAKARATA, 1 SEPT

Indonesian political parties, responding to widespread unrest, have agreed to curb state-funded perks for politicians, a move announced by President Prabowo Subianto. Protests across Indonesia, particularly in Jakarta, erupted over various grievances, primarily a controversial increase in lawmakers' monthly allowances of 50 million rupiah ($3,030; £2,250), nearly ten times Jakarta's minimum wage. Tensions heightened following the death of a ride-sharing driver during a police intervention, prompting accusations of excessive force.

Prabowo condemned the protests that escalated into violence, labelling actions as potentially "treason and terrorism". He ordered a crackdown on looting and property damage, with police apologising for the incident.

However, student leader Muzammil Ihsan stated the measures were "not enough", urging the government to address deeper issues. *—Agencies*

FRANCIS' LEGACY LIVES ON

Pope Leo vows continuity of LGBTQ+ support

Pope Leo XIV delivers his blessing, at the Vatican on Sunday **PHOTO: PTI**

VATICAN CITY, 1 SEPT

Pope Leo XIV met with one of the most prominent advocates for greater LGBTQ+ inclusion in the Catholic Church and encouraged his ministry, just days before a planned Holy Year pilgrimage of LGBTQ+ Catholics to the Vatican in a sign of continued welcome in this new pontificate.

The Rev. James Martin, a New York-based Jesuit author and editor, said Leo told him on Monday he intended to continue Pope Francis's policy of LGBTQ+ acceptance in the church and encouraged him to keep up his advocacy.

"I heard the same message from Pope Leo that I heard from Pope Francis, which is the desire to welcome all people, including LGBTQ people," Martin told press after the audience. "It was wonderful. It was very consoling and very encouraging and frankly a lot of fun."

The meeting, which lasted about half an hour, was officially announced by the Vatican in a sign that Leo wanted it made public.

The audience was significant because it showed a strong sign of continuity with Francis, who, more than any of Leo's predecessors, worked to make the Catholic Church a more welcoming place for LGBTQ+ Catholics. From his 2013 quip, "Who am I to judge?" about a purportedly gay priest, to his decision to allow priests to bless same-sex couples, Francis distinguished himself with his message of welcome.

Leo's position on LGBTQ+ Catholics had up until now been something of a question.

"It's wonderful to hear this continuation," Martin said, adding that Leo told him his priorities are to work for peace and unity, citing the conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza and Myanmar. *—PTI*

Boy shot dead in Houston after doorbell prank

HOUSTON, 1 SEP

An 11-year-old boy has been fatally shot in Houston after a prank involving ringing the doorbell of a home and running away, police reported on Sunday.

The incident occurred late on Saturday evening, with the boy engaging in what is commonly known as "ding dong ditching." This prank typically involves fleeing before the occupant answers the door. The boy, whose identity has yet to be disclosed, succumbed to his injuries on Sunday.

Police spokesperson Shay Awosiyan said no arrests have been made yet.

"Other 'ding dong ditch' pranks have turned deadly in the past," noted the report. In 2023, a man in Southern California was convicted of three counts of first-degree murder for intentionally ramming his vehicle into three teenage boys who rang his doorbell as a prank. Additionally, in May, a Virginia man was charged with second-degree murder after fatally shooting an 18-year-old who rang his doorbell while filming a TikTok video of the prank. *—PTI*

ATF price cut by 1.4%, LPG down by ₹51.50

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices were cut by 1.4 per cent on Monday, while commercial LPG cylinders became cheaper by Rs 51.50, reflecting a drop in global benchmark rates. Jet fuel (ATF) price was reduced by Rs 1,308.41 per kilolitre, or 1.4 per cent, to Rs 90,713.52 per kl in the national capital -- home to one of the busiest airports in the country, according to state-owned fuel retailers. Alongside, oil firms reduced the price of commercial LPG used in hotels and restaurants by Rs 51.50 per 19-kg cylinder. Commercial LPG now costs Rs 1,580 in the national capital. This the sixth straight reduction in commercial LPG rates. *—PTI*

Rupee closes at all-time low of 88.19 against USD

MUMBAI, 1 SEPT

The rupee depreciated 10 paise to close at an all-time low of 88.19 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday amid Indo-US trade deal uncertainties and higher dollar demand from importers. Forex traders said the rupee opened on a weaker note this morning and revisited its all-time intra-day low of 88.33 against the American currency, weighed down by persistent foreign fund outflows. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 88.18 against the US dollar, then lost ground and fell to an all-time intra-day low of 88.33. The domestic unit finally settled at an all-time closing low of 88.19 (provisional) against the greenback, registering a fall of 10 paise over its previous close. *—PTI*

Semiconductor firm Tessolve raises $150M from TPG

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Semiconductor firm Tessolve has announced it has secured $150 million in funding from TPG, a leading global alternative asset management company. This represents the largest fund-raising effort for a semiconductor engineering services provider in India. Tessolve plans to utilise the new capital to enhance its global delivery centres, expand advanced testing laboratories, and accelerate strategic acquisitions, fortifying its role within the global and Indian semiconductor ecosystems. Having entered the semiconductor domain in 2016 with the acquisition of Tessolve, Hero Electronix has since reported revenue growth from $25 million in FY16 to over $150 million by FY25. Tessolve Co-Founder & CEO Srini Chinamilli expressed enthusiasm about partnering with TPG to accelerate organic and inorganic growth and bolster R&D efforts. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

30 vehicles break down hours after diesel refueling

GHAZIABAD, 1 SEPT

30 vehicle owners have lodged a police complaint after their cars broke down within hours of refuelling at a fuel station in Morta in Uttar Pradesh's Gaziabad between 26 and 29 August. Angry customers staged a protest at the Bajaj HP filling station after their cars, including a few high-end models, developed engine problems. They accused the outlet of selling adulterated diesel, which led to the cars breaking down. They claimed that bills for repair may cost up to Rs 3.5 lakh per vehicle.Sachin Tyagi, whose Kia Sonet broke down, said the problem surfaced immediately after refuelling. When he took it to a showroom for repair, he was told that the impurities in diesel had choked the fuel system. *—Agencies*

Manufacturing PMI rises to 17-year high in Aug

This was due to strong demand, higher output and job creation

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

Indian manufacturing sector witnessed the fastest improvement in operating conditions in over 17 years in August, driven by an increased production efficiency and healthy demand conditions, a monthly report said on Monday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose from 59.1 in July to 59.3 in August, indicating the fastest improvement in operating conditions for 17-and-a-half years.

In the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

"India's manufacturing PMI hit another new high in August, driven by a rapid expansion in production. The increase of US tariffs on Indian goods to 50 per cent might have contributed to the slight easing in new export orders growth, as American buyers refrain from placing orders in the midst of tariff uncertainty," Pranjul Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC, said.

Underlying data showed a softer increase in international orders placed with Indian manufacturers. The rise was the weakest for five months, though sharp by historical standards.

Firms reported having secured new work from clients in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the US.

Meanwhile, incoming new orders rose to broadly the same extent as in July, which was the fastest in 57 months.

In addition to demand buoyancy, survey participants linked growth to advertising success.

Meanwhile, the Indian economy reported a stronger-than-expected 7.8 per cent growth in April-June, its fastest pace in five quarters.

According to the survey, during August, companies upped the pace at which additional materials were bought, and more jobs were created, partly reflecting positive expectations regarding the outlook.

The strongest sales and output performances were noted in the intermediate goods category, followed by capital and then consumer goods.

The HSBC India Manufacturing PMI is compiled by S&P Global from responses to questionnaires sent to purchasing managers in a panel of around 400 manufacturers. *—PTI*

AMID MILEAGE CONCERNS

SC refuses to hear plea on petrol with 20% ethanol blend

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

The Supreme Court on Monday rejected a PIL challenging the nationwide rollout of 20 per cent ethanol-blended petrol (EBP-20), alleging millions of motorists were forced to use the fuel not designed for their vehicles.

A bench comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran did not agree to the contentions raised in the plea filed by advocate Akshay Malhotra, who sought directions to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to ensure availability of ethanol-free petrol at all fuel stations.

Attorney General R Venkataramani, appearing for the Centre, opposed the plea and claimed EBP-20 benefits sugarcane farmers.

"I say it with some responsibility that the petitioner (Malhotra) is just a name lender. A lobby is behind it. The government has considered everything," law officer said.

The bench then went ahead and dismissed the plea.

Senior advocate Shadan Farasat, appearing for the petitioner, submitted only EBP-20 was "seemingly available" at petrol pumps now, that too without any notice.

He said EBP-20 was not a problem for vehicles compatible with it.

Farasat sought consumers to be given a choice while adding EBP-20 was leading to a drop in mileage of vehicles.

The PIL sought a direction to the authorities to mandatorily label ethanol content on all petrol pumps and dispensing units, making it clearly visible to consumers, and also to ensure consumers were informed about ethanol compatibility of their vehicles at the time of fuel dispensing.

It said millions of motorists were being left helpless at petrol pumps, being forced to buy incompatible fuel.

The plea highlighted damage to engines, dropping of mileage among other consequences of the move. *—PTI*

NIFTY UP BY 198.20 PTS

Sensex rebounds by nearly 555 points

MUMBAI, 1 SEPT

- The BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.64 per cent and smallcap index climbed 1.49 per cent. As many as 2,796 stocks advanced while 1,391 declined and 193 remained unchanged on the BSE

Benchmark BSE Sensex on Monday rebounded by nearly 555 points on value buying in IT, auto and consumer durables shares after three straight days of losses and strong macro data.

The 30-share Sensex jumped 554.84 points or 0.70 per cent to settle at 80,364.49 with 23 of its constituents ending higher and seven lower. The index opened with gains and later surged 597.19 points or 0.74 per cent to hit a high of 80,406.84.

The 50-share NSE Nifty spurted by 198.20 points or 0.81 per cent to close at 24,625.05.

Among Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Motors, Trent, Eternal, Asian Paints and Infosys were the major gainers.

However, Sun Pharma, ITC, Hindustan Unilever and Titan were among the laggards. India's economy grew by a stronger-than-expected 7.8 per cent in April-June, its fastest pace in five quarters, before US President Donald Trump imposed tariffs that now cloud the outlook, threatening key exports like textiles.

The BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.64 per cent and smallcap index climbed 1.49 per cent.

Auto surged the most by 2.68 per cent, followed by consumer durables (2.07 per cent), consumer discretionary (2 per cent), capital goods (1.93 per cent), power (1.80 per cent), metal (1.68 per cent), BSE Focused IT (1.65 per cent) and BSE IT (1.62 per cent).

As many as 2,796 stocks advanced while 1,391 declined and 193 remained unchanged on the BSE. *—PTI*

Gold touches lifetime high of Rs 1.05 lakh/10g

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Gold and silver prices on Monday surged to all-time highs on MCX, amid hopes of an interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve. Rising for the sixth consecutive session, gold prices rallied Rs 1,000 to hit yet another record of Rs 1,05,670 per 10g in New Delhi, lifted by expectations of a rate cut by the US Federal Reserve this month and robust demand in overseas markets.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had climbed Rs 1,000 to hit a record high of Rs 1,04,670 per 10g on Saturday.

In the local market, gold of 99.5 per cent purity jumped Rs 800 to hit a lifetime high of Rs 1,04,800 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes) on Monday.

Traders said the precious metal surged as investors surged towards safe-haven assets amid growing concerns over the independence of the US Fed and heightened uncertainty around tariff policies.

Spot gold rose USD 22.51, or 0.65 per cent, to trade at USD 3,470.51 per ounce in New York.

Silver prices on Monday skyrocketed by Rs 2,597 to zoom past the crucial Rs 1.24 lakh mark for a kilogram in futures trade in line with strong trends in the international markets.

The white metal for the December contract rallied Rs 2,597 or 2.13 per cent to hit a record high of Rs 1,24,470 per kg in the early trade. In the overseas market, Comex silver futures for the December contract breached the USD 41 per ounce, its highest level in 14 years, in New York. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

PHOTO: PTI

CENTRE TO FAST TRACK ONLINE GAMING ACT: IT SECY

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

The government is set to swiftly implement the Online Gaming Act, according to a senior official.

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025, which received Parliament's approval on 21 August, prohibits all forms of online money games while promoting e-sports and other online gaming activities.

The Act will commence once formally notified by the government, having already received the President's assent. In a recent meeting, banks and fintech firms urged for detailed guidelines to facilitate compliance with the Act, requesting reasonable time to prepare systems that monitor online money game transactions. *—PTI*

'GST 2.0 should pave way towards single tax rate'

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Ahead of the upcoming GST Council meeting on 3-4 September, industry leaders and a think tank have called for significant reforms to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) structure in India.

The Think Change Forum released a report advocating for a shift to a simpler system with just two GST slabs: 5 per cent and 18 per cent, while capping the peak rate at 18 per cent. "Creating a 40 per cent slab for sin or luxury goods will set a precedent for expansion, undermining simplification," the report stated.

Hero MotoCorp Chairman Pawan Munjal emphasised that lowering GST on two-wheelers would enhance affordability for first-time buyers, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas.

Currently, two-wheelers up to 350 cc are taxed at 28 per cent, while those over 350 cc attract an additional 3 per cent compensation cess. The GST Council will deliberate on these recommendations, which aim to boost compliance, reduce litigation, and support India's aspiration to be a developed economy. *—PTI*

MTNL and BHEL fined for non-compliance with SEBI norms

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

State-run telecom operator Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd (MTNL) has been fined Rs 6.73 lakh by the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) for failing to comply with Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) regulations regarding board composition. According to a regulatory filing, the penalties relate to the absence of a woman director and non-compliance with the audit and remuneration committees. MTNL noted, "The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) appoints all board members, including independent directors," and confirmed that "two Independent directors, including one woman director, were appointed as of 15 April." The company is seeking waivers for the fines.

BHEL hit with penalties

In a parallel move, Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) faces a fine of Rs 5.36 lakh from both exchanges for not having recommended number of independent directors. BHEL stated, "The appointment of independent directors is handled by the central government," and is also seeking a waiver of the imposed fines.

Coal India penalised

Coal India Ltd (CIL) has been fined Rs 10.72 lakh for non-compliance with SEBI norms regarding independent directors, with Rs 5.36 lakh imposed by both exchanges. CIL stated, "The appointment of all board members is done by the President of India," reiterating ongoing efforts with the coal ministry. *—PTI*

'GDP numbers don't reflect tariff shock'

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

Congress on Monday slammed the government over the GDP numbers for April-June 2025, saying they have led to "irrational exuberance" and the "Trump tariff shock" is simply not reflected in them as its real consequence will begin to get felt in the second quarter.

Congress General Secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said the front-loading of exports to US by exporters attempting to escape tariffs has actually boosted export growth and therefore headline number.

Nominal GDP growth rate, that is, without adjusting for inflation, is still subdued and is markedly lower than in January-March, he said, adding, the real consequence of the tariffs will begin to get felt in second quarter. *—PTI*

DEMOCRATISED OPTION

Vedanta workers to own Rs 450 cr stocks

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

Mining conglomerate Vedanta Ltd on Monday said it awarded Employee Stock Options Scheme (ESOS) worth Rs 450 crore in FY25.

ESOS is an employee benefit plan that allows them the right to purchase company shares at a deep-discounted price (Re1), rewarding their role in organisational growth. This is deemed as a performance incentive and aids in wealth-creation.

"Vedanta Group...has set a new benchmark in inclusive wealth creation by awarding ESOS worth over Rs 450 crore in FY25," the company said in a statement.

The ESOS grant includes top management and entry-level professionals, making it one of the most democratised stock options programmes.

The company has administered its ESOS for over 20 years. The equity awards have increased by over 80 per cent in a period of just 5 years, the statement said.

Vedanta Ltd, a subsidiary of Vedanta Resources Ltd, is one of the world's leading critical minerals, energy and technology companies spanning across India, South Africa, Namibia, Liberia, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Korea, Taiwan and Japan with significant operations in sectors like oil and gas, zinc, lead, silver, copper, iron ore and steel. *—PTI*

Govt scrutiny puts fertiliser firms on edge

NEW DELHI, 1 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

India's specialty fertiliser industry is confronting significant challenges as new regulations bring biostimulants under governmental scrutiny, prompting warnings from industry experts that many small manufacturers may face closure due to compliance costs. The February 2025 amendment to the Fertiliser Control Order has introduced new hurdles for the biostimulant sector, which had previously functioned without oversight for nearly a decade.

"The industry is not fully ready to adopt the new regulations. Many small SMEs who are operating will be wiped out in the process," said Rajib Chakraborty, President of the Soluble Fertiliser Industry Association (SFIA).

With thousands of biostimulant products on the market, few have met the stringent government approval processes. Looking ahead, the industry anticipates continued adjustments over a transitional period of 3-4 years. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Jamie takes indefinite break from red-ball

LONDON, 1 SEPT

England seamer Jamie Overton has decided not to continue playing red-ball cricket for the foreseeable future. The fast bowler revealed that he would be taking an indefinite break and would only concentrate on white-ball cricket due to workload management. The England and CSK pacer has played 99 first-class games for Surrey and Somerset, and has represented England in two Tests, but playing across formats has taken a toll on his body, and the pacer has decided to focus only on T20Is and ODI cricket. "Red-ball, first-class cricket has provided the foundation for my professional career and has been the gateway to every opportunity I've had in the game so far. It's where I learnt the game, and it fuelled the goals and ambitions that have driven me for so long," *—PTI*

PHOTO: X/@KANE

Bayern is still searching for Harry Kane backup

BERLIN, 1 SEPT

Bayern Munich's search for a backup for star forward Harry Kane was continuing on the last day of the summer transfer period, Monday.Bayern's efforts to sign Senegal forward Nicholas Jackson on loan from Chelsea failed late Sunday after an injury to his teammate Liam Delap forced a rethink on the deal. The clubs had reportedly reached an agreement, but Delap's injury on Saturday put a halt to proceedings. Chelsea, which had apparently asked the player to return to London, would only consider a permanent switch, and Bayern insisted on a loan. They failed to reach an agreement.Bayern powerbroker Uli Hoeneß last month said the club should only make loan signings for the rest of the transfer window, avoiding any more big-money signings following the arrival of Luis Díaz from Liverpool. *—PTI*

Gritty India lose 0-3 to Iran in CAFA Nations Cup

HISAR, 1 SEPT

A gritty India fought hard for most part but let in two goals in the last seven minutes to eventually lose 0-3 to defending champions Iran in their second group match of the CAFA Nations Cup football tournament here on Monday. The Indian defence largely remained compact and thwarted waves of Iranian attack, but failed to stop strikes from Amir hossein Hosseinzadeh (60th minute), Ali Alipourghara (89th), and Mehdi Taremi (90+6) to lose the match.Iran is a formidable side, ranked 20th in the world, while India is currently at 133rd in the FIFA ranking. *—PTI*

Maaya enters US Open junior singles 2nd round

NEW YORK, 1 SEPT

Teenage Indian tennis player Maaya Rajeshwaran Revathi overcame China's Zhang-Qian Wei to enter the second round of the junior girls' singles event at the US Open, but Hitesh Chauhan bowed out after a straight-sets defeat here. The unseeded 16-year-old, who hails from Coimbatore and trains at the Rafael Nadal Academy in Mallorca, Spain, defeated her Chinese rival 7-6 (7-5), 6-3 in little over an hour and a half. She will take on second-seeded Hannah Klugman of the United Kingdom in the second round. Klugman decimated Aspen Schuman of the US 6-0, 6-2. *—PTI*

India thrash Kazakhstan 15-0, finish top of Pool A

Sukhjeet and Jugraj score hat-tricks in the one-sided match

RAJGIR, 1 SEPT

India beat Kazakhstan 15-0 in their Asia Cup 2025 Hockey Pool A encounter on Monday. Abhishek slammed four goals while Jugraj Singh and Sukhjeet Singh scored hat-tricks. Rajinder Singh, Amit Rohidas, Sanjay, Dilpreet Singh and Harmanpreet Singh got one goal each finishes top of Pool A. Sukhjeet, and Jugraj also scored hat-tricks in the one-sided match.

The Harmanpreet Singh-led side has already booked their spot in the Super 4s with victories over China and Japan. India started their campaing with a hard-fought 4-3 victory over China. They looked impressive in their second group match as well as the side went on to register a 3-2 win against Japan to qualify for the next round.

Malaysia, Korea progress to Super 4s from Pool B

Malaysia and Korea won their respective Pool B matches convincingly to progress to the Super 4 stage of the men's Asia Cup hockey tournament here on Monday. While Malaysia thrashed Chinese Taipei 15-0, Korea prevailed over Bangladesh 5-1. Malaysia topped the pool with three wins from as many matches, while Korea finished second with six points. Bangladesh finished third with three points, while Chinese Taipei remained winless. In the second match of the day, Malaysia scored through Ashran Hamsani (8th, 15th, 32nd, 54th minutes), Akhimullah Anuar (10th, 20th, 29th, 45th, 56th), Norsyafiq Sumantri (20th, 40th, 60th), Abu Kamal Azrai (22nd), Andywalfian Effrynus (24th), and Aiman Rozemi (32nd).In the day's first Pool B match, Dain Son (9th, 11th) scored a brace, while Seungwoo Lee (16th), Seyong Oh (22nd), and Jihun Yang (60th) struck a goal each for Korea. Bangladesh's lone goal came from the sticks of Sohanur Sobuj in the 22nd minute. *—PTI*

The Indian team celebrates after defeating Kazakhstan on the fourth day in Rajgir on Mondayn PHOTO: PTI

LEAGUES CUP

Seattle Sounders Lift Leagues Cup PHOTO: X/@SOUNDERS

Seattle Sounders stun Lionel Messi's Inter Miami 3-0

MADRID, 1 SEPT

Seattle Sounders stunned Lionel Messi and Inter Miami 3-0 on Sunday to win the Leagues Cup, completing its collection of North American trophies in front of a record crowd at Lumen Field.

Osaze De Rosario scored in the 26th minute, and Alex Roldan added a penalty in the second half before Paul Rothrock capped the scoring for the Sounders, whose determined defense stymied a star-studded Inter lineup led by Argentine icon Messi.

Inter's frustrations spilled over at the final whistle, and officials had to scramble to quell a brewing brawl before the Sounders whose $16.7 million payroll is dwarfed by Miami's $46.8 million player compensation total could celebrate their first Leagues Cup title.

Sounders became the first Major League Soccer team to win every North American Trophy on offer.

They already own two MLS Cup crowns, an MLS Supporters Shield, four US Open Cups, and a CONCACAF Champions Cup. The latest triumph came before an announced crowd of 69,314 -- shattering the previous record for a Leagues Cup crowd of 50,675. *—PTI*

Pragg hits career-high in FIDE Rankings

DUBAI, 1 SEPT

In the September 2025 FIDE classical rating update, R Praggnanandhaa surged to a career-high 2785 Elo, landing him at No. 4 overall and making him India's highest-rated classical player. The gain was fuelled by his second-place finish at the Sinquefield Cup, which netted him six rating points in August., At the very top remains Magnus Carlsen, no longer the reigning world champion but still the No. 1 classical player by rating. He is followed by American grandmasters Hikaru Nakamura and Fabiano Caruana, at No. 2 and No. 3, respectively., India's other top classical players include Arjun Erigaisi at No. 5, and the reigning World Champion D Gukesh, just behind at No. 6, ., A notable newcomer to the global top 10 is Germany's Vincent Keymer, who climbed sharply after a dominant performance at the Chennai Grand Masters 2025, gaining 21 rating points. *—PTI*

Delhi to host next Badminton World C'ships in August 2026

PARIS, 1 SEPT

New Delhi has been chosen as the host city of the next Badminton World Championships in August 2026, the sport's global governing body, BWF, announced on Monday.

The Badminton World Federation's (BWF) most prestigious tournament will return to India after 17 years, with Hyderabad hosting it first way back in 2009.

The announcement was made during the closing ceremony of the 2025 championships in Paris, where a handover took place between BWF president Khunying Patama Leeswadtrakul, Frank Laurent, chief of the Federation Francaise de Badminton, and general secretary of Badminton Association of India Sanjay Mishra, who promised that the country will carry forward the standards of "excellence and grandeur" that Paris has showcased.

We assure that India will give nothing less than 100 per cent to uphold and carry forward the same standards of excellence and grandeur that Paris has showcased. We look forward to welcoming the badminton family to Delhi," Mishra was quoted as saying in a BAI release.

The Delhi edition will also mark the tournament's return to Asia after four years, with Nanjing in China hosting it in 2018.

"For India, hosting the Championships again highlights its standing as both a powerhouse on court and a major destination on the global badminton map," the BAI added. At the forefront stands PV Sindhu, one of the most successful women's singles players in the tournament's history, with five medals: a gold, two silvers, and two bronzes. Furthermore, India's medal streak has continued unbroken since 2011, most recently extended by Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty's bronze in Paris 2025, their second at the event. *—PTI*

India's Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy won the men's doubles bronze medal at the 2025 edition PHOTO: X/@BWF

BIGGEST EVER

Women's WC champs to get nearly ₹40 crore pay cheque

DUBAI, 1 SEPT

The winners of the upcoming ICC Women's Cricket World Cup will receive the biggest-ever prize money in the history of the tournament, a massive hike from USD 1.32 million (Rs 11.65 crore) in the previous edition to USD 4.48 million (Rs 39.55 crore), the sport's global governing body announced on Monday.

The 13th edition of the global showpiece event, beginning on September 30, is being jointly hosted by India and Sri Lanka. Overall, the eight-team event will witness nearly a three-fold increase in prize money, with the ICC announcing a total prize purse of USD 13.88 million (Rs 122.5 crore approx) for the mega event. "The International Cricket Council (ICC) today announced a staggering four-fold increase in prize money for the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025 to be hosted by India from 30 September to 2 November.

The ICC sets a new benchmark for women's cricket as champions walk away with a record USD 4.48 million in prize money," said a statement from the global cricket body. "The overall prize money at the eight-team tournament totals USD 13.88 million, which is a rise of 297 per cent from the USD 3.5 million (Rs 31 crore approx) at the last edition held in New Zealand in 2022. The total prize pot eclipses the prize money at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023, which had total prize money of USD 10 million (Rs 88.26 crore approx)." The runners-up will now receive USD 2.24 million (Rs 19.77 crore approx), an increase of 273 per cent in comparison to the USD 600,000 (Rs 5.30 crore) England received for reaching the final. *—PTI*

Leverkusen fires Erik ten Hag as coach

LEVERKUSEN, 1 SEPT

Erik ten Hag lasted three games at Bayer Leverkusen. The Dutch coach was fired on Monday after doubts emerged in Leverkusen over the former Manchester United manager's ability to oversee the German team's successful rebuild after a summer exodus of key players. "This decision wasn't easy for us," Leverkusen sports director Simon Rolfes said in a statement. "Nobody wanted to take this step. But the last few weeks showed that building a new and successful team with this setup could not be achieved effectively.

Djokovic's neck bothers him during US Open win

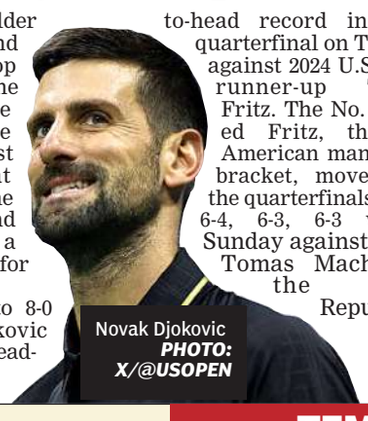
NEW YORK, 1 SEPT

Novak Djokovic was cruising along with a big early lead in his U.S. Open fourth-round match on Sunday night when his neck started bothering him. That didn't stop Djokovic from dominating 144th-ranked qualifier Jan-Lennard Struff 6-3, 6-3, 6-2 to reach his record 64th Grand Slam quarterfinal.

"What gives me a lot of encouragement right now, and positivity, is the way I played tonight," Djokovic said. "Best performance of the tournament so far. Hopefully I can keep that going."

Djokovic was ahead 4-0, 15-love when he hit a nicely angled volley winner to go up 30-love in that game. The 24-time Grand Slam champion immediately grabbed the back of his neck and started turning his head. The 38-year-old Djokovic kept trying to stretch his neck or flex his right shoulder between points, and he went on to drop that game and the next one, too. But he soon regained the upper hand against Struff, who beat Frances Tiafoe in the previous round and was trying to get to a major quarterfinal for the first time.

After improving to 8-0 against Struff, Djokovic now carries a 10-0 head-to-head record into his quarterfinal on Tuesday against 2024 U.S. Open runner-up Taylor Fritz. The No. 4-seeded Fritz, the last American man in the bracket, moved into the quarterfinals with a 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 victory Sunday against No. 21 Tomas Machac of the Czech Republic. *—PTI*



Novak Djokovic PHOTO: X/@USOPEN

Rohit Sharma undergoes Bronco Test in Bengaluru

BENGALURU, 1 SEPT

India's star player Rohit Sharma recently turned up for the newly introduced bronco test, and the result of it has come out. How a 38-year-old Rohit would perform at the new form of test that has been put into effect by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) earlier this month was the talk of the town. However, Rohit has not only just passed it but also reportedly impressed everyone with his performance during the test, which also had the Yo-Yo test that is already being used by the Indian cricket team to measure the fitness level of the players.

All the players who featured in the tests on August 30 and 31 have passed them, as per RevSportz Global. It added that everyone was impressed with Rohit's physical appearance and his performance at the Centre of Excellence during the test in Bengaluru. Prasidh Krishna really impressed with a high number during the test, the report added.

Rohit is expected to tour Down Under in October for an ODI series (19, 23, 25), but it remains to be seen whether Rohit will turn out for India A in three one-day matches against Australia A on 30 September, 3 October, and 5 October at Kanpur. Rohit has already called time on his career in T20Is and Tests. After India's T20 World Cup triumph in June last year, he quit the shortest format at the highest level. *—PTI*

Rohit Sharma PHOTO: PTI

Charlie Woods makes an ace at TPC Sawgrass

PONTE, 1 SEPT

Charlie Woods made an ace on the third hole of the TPC Sawgrass on Sunday in the final round of the Junior Players Championship. Just like his hole-in-one in the final round of the PNC Championship last December, he wasn't sure that it went in until he heard the gallery. Another year, another hole-in-one for the 16-year-old son of Tiger Woods.

Woods shot an even-par 72 to tie for 31st in the American Junior Golf Association event at the Stadium course, where his father won twice at The Players Championship.

He finished 16 shots behind Miles Russell, who shot 70 to win by two. Russell reached the semifinals of the U.S. Amateur earlier this month and is an alternate for the Walker Cup.

Woods didn't have the only hole-in-one on Sunday. Guus Lafeber of the Netherlands had an ace on the par-3 eighth hole. He tied for 19th. *—PTI*

Charlie Woods PHOTO: X/@GOLF

TEMPLE OF SPEED

Hamilton and Ferrari need some Monza magic

ZANDVOORT, 1 SEPT

Monza is where the magic happens for Ferrari. And the Italian Grand Prix couldn't come at a better time.

Formula 1's annual pilgrimage to the "Temple of Speed" this week brings a chance for Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc to rebound from race-ending crashes at the Dutch Grand Prix on Sunday. It was only Ferrari's second Grand Prix this year without scoring points, and Hamilton also picked up a grid penalty for Monza.

The only Italian on the grid, Mercedes' Kimi Antonelli, wants to "put in the trash" a practice crash at Monza last year, and make up for ending Leclerc's race on Sunday. Success has been rare for Italian drivers at Monza, though.

Ferrari's British driver Lewis Hamilton looks at his car after crashing during the Formula One Dutch Grand Prix PHOTO: X/@GP

There isn't much that seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton hasn't done in F1, but racing for Ferrari at Monza will be something "unique."

Hamilton was hit with a grid penalty

Lewis Hamilton will serve a five-place grid penalty at Ferrari's home Italian Grand Prix in Monza next weekend after failing to slow for warning flags at Sunday's Dutch Grand Prix in Zandvoort.

The sanction capped a miserable weekend for Formula One's oldest team, which left the Netherlands empty-handed after both Hamilton and teammate Charles Leclerc crashed out. Ferrari remains second in the standings but now trails runaway leader McLaren by 324 points in the Constructors' standings. *—PTI*